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WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

NORTH CENTRAL CALIFORNIA STUDY AREAS

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

1986

U.S. DEPARTMENT
OF THE INTERIOR

BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT
CALIFORNIA

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United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CALIFORNIA STATE OFFICE
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825

IN REPLY REFER TO:

1792
CA-930

DEC 1 1986

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review and comment is the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Timbered Crater and Lava Wilderness Study Area (WSAs) in North Central California. Timbered Crater WSA includes the Baker Cypress Instant Study Area. The EIS analyzes the impact of adding 30,322 acres to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Two No Wilderness Alternatives and a Partial Wilderness Alternative are also considered. The draft EIS was distributed in June 1983 for a 90-day public review period and a hearing was held in July 1983.

All recommendations contained herein are preliminary and subject to change during administrative review. The statement was prepared pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and responds to the mandate of Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 to review all public land roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more; determine their suitability or nonsuitability for wilderness designation; and report these suitability recommendations to the President no later than October 21, 1991.

For further information contact: Richard Drehobl, Area Manager, Alturas Resource Area, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 771, Alturas, California 96101.

Sincerely,

Ed Hastey

Ed Hastey
State Director

Enclosures
As stated

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NORTH CENTRAL CALIFORNIA STUDY AREAS

Prepared by

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

UKIAH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

Ed Hastey
State Director, California

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS
NORTH CENTRAL CALIFORNIA STUDY AREAS

Draft ( ) Final (X) Environmental Impact Statement

1. Type of Action: Administrative ( ) Legislative (X)

2. Abstract:

The Bureau of Land Management, Alturas Resource Area, Susanville District, California, has analyzed the effects of wilderness designation and nondesignation for the Timbered Crater Wilderness Study Area (WSA) and the Lava WSA. The alternatives to wilderness designation include partial wilderness, and no wilderness. Wilderness characteristics and special features are examined. Preliminary recommendations are to designate both WSAs as nonsuitable for wilderness.

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SUMMARY

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), through the Secretary of the Interior , is under Congressional mandate to review roadless public land areas of 5,000 acres or more with wilderness characteristics and to make recommendations, by 1991, to the President on the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness. This environmental impact statement (EIS) assess the environmental consequences of managing the Timbered Crater WSA (which includes the Baker Cypress Instant Study Area) and the Lava WSA as wilderness and analyzes alternatives to wilderness. The study areas include portions of Shasta, Lassen, Siskiyou, and Modoc Counties and are located within the Alturas Resource Area in BLM's Susanville District.

To help "scope" and summarize significant issues related to wilderness designation, BLM requested public comments on its wilderness inventory and planning process. Scoping and public involvement has not identified any significant issues or environmental consequences in the two WSAs.

Alternatives considered for the Timbered Crater WSA are: All Wilderness, Partial Wilderness, and No Wilderness/No Action, which is the proposed action.

Two alternatives are considered for the Lava WSA: All Wilderness and No Wilderness/No Action, which is the proposed action. Partial Wilderness was considered for Lava WSA but was dropped from detailed analysis because there are no significant resource conflicts to resolve and no practical boundary adjustments.

A summary of impacts for each alternative is contained in Tables 2-1 and 2-2.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) considers the possible consequences of wilderness designation, partial, and nondesignation for the Timbered Crater and Lava Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) in the Alturas Resource Area in the Bureau of Land Management's Susanville District in California. The analysis evolves from a requirement included by Congress in Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) directing the Secretary of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to review roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more having wilderness characteristics and by 1991 to recommend to the President the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness. Under Sections 202 and 203 of FLPMA, BLM can, through its planning system, recommend additional lands for wilderness designation. In determining wilderness values, the law directs the Bureau to use the criteria given by Congress in the Wilderness Act of 1964. In Section 2(c) of the Act, Congress states that "wilderness is essentially an area of undeveloped Federal land in a natural condition, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined typed of recreation. The area may contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."

LOCATION

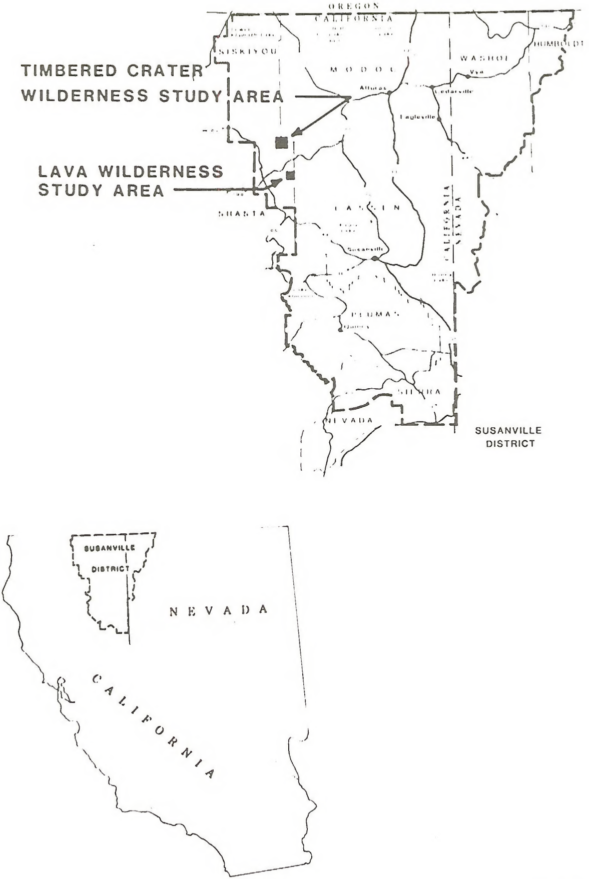
Both WSAs are within approximately 250 miles of the San Francisco Bay and Sacramento metropolitan areas (Map 1-1). The Timbered Crater WSA (CA 030-201) is in Shasta, Modoc, and Siskiyou Counties and contains 18,690 acres of public land. The Lava WSA (CA-030-203) is in Shasta and Lassen Counties and contains 11,632 acres of public land.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

The purpose of the proposals (which call for neither of the WSAs to be designated wilderness) is, nevertheless, to preserve the natural amenities of these areas in the context of balanced multiple use. The means by which this will be done is described by the pattern of management actions set forth in Chapter 2. This will contribute toward the need for economically productive and recreational use of the land while preserving the special features identified in each WSA.

THE WILDERNESS REVIEW PROCESS AND ITS INTEGRATION WITH PLANNING

To accomplish the mandate of Section 603 of FLPMA, the BLM developed a wilderness review process containing three phases: inventory, study, and reporting. The inventory phase of this process, initiated in 1978, involved examining the public lands to determine and locate the existence of areas containing wilderness characteristics that met the criteria established in the Wilderness Act. Areas clearly lacking wilderness characteristics are sort out from lands that might have those characteristics. This intensive inventory was then followed by a 90-day public review period, after which final WSAs were identified.



Map 1-1
Location Map

This inventory process and a general description of all of California's WSAs are given in Wilderness: Final Intensive Inventory, Public Lands Administered by BLM California Outside the California Desert Conservation Area (1979). A copy of this publication is available at any BLM office.

The second step in the review process was to integrate wilderness evaluation into the BLM Planning System (43 CFR 1600). In this case, the wilderness study is an isolated mini-plan adjacent to the Alturas RMP. The wilderness study criteria and quality standards contained in the BLM's Wilderness Study Policy: Policies, Criteria and Guidelines for Conducting Wilderness Studies on Public Lands. (47 FR 5098-5122) were applied to each WSA.

In addition to the above referenced criteria and standards, issues for discussion were identified through public comment and internal scoping, conflicts were analyzed, and alternatives were developed. See page 15 for a discussion of which alternatives were selected and why. These alternatives are the basis for analysis of environmental consequences and resource tradeoffs.

Following public review of the draft environmental impact statement, the Susanville District, with State Director concurrence, prepared a final environmental impact statement and wilderness study report. These were reviewed by the BLM Director and the Secretary of the Interior, who filed this final EIS and who will make a recommendation to the President. The President has up to two years to make his final recommendation to Congress, which has sole authority to designate an area as wilderness. Until Congress decides whether or not to designate an area as wilderness, the WSAs will be managed in accordance with the Bureau's Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review (Department of the Interior, December 1979).

SCOPING

The Council on Environmental Quality Regulations Implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR, Part 1501.7) and the BLM planning regulations (43 CFR 1610.4-1) require an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant issues related to a proposed action. During this process, the scope and importance of issues related to the proposed action and alternatives were identified. Information obtained during the scoping process was one of the sources used to determine which impact topics would be addressed in detail in this EIS. Additional purposes of the scoping process are to inform affected Federal, State, and local agencies and other interested parties about the proposed project, and to identify existing environmental reports and information related to the impact assessment.

The scoping process involved discussions with the public and resource specialists and managers of BLM and other relevant agencies. Written comments were received and compiled as a result of Federal Register announcements, news releases, mailings, and articles about the proposal. Comments were also solicited during public meetings. In addition, the initial scoping effort has been followed by an effort to continue agency and public involvement throughout the development of this EIS. Comments on the draft EIS (see Table 5-1, page 5-6) were carefully considered in the selection outlines the steps taken by BLM in the scoping and public involvement process for the EIS.

SCOPING PROCESS

Portions of the land use planning process were used to initially screen for potential issues and public concerns prior to the formal EIS scoping period. Approximately 700 planning news letters were sent to the public at large, requesting comments, concerns, and land management problems and opportunities. We received a response from approximately 250 individuals and organizations, of which only a few identified wilderness as an issue. However, because the BLM Management Team felt the ramifications of wilderness designations could have long-term effects, and because BLM policy required the wilderness issue to be studied as part of the planning process, they determined Wilderness Study Areas should be an issue in the planning process. Approximately 300 copies of the Planning Criteria Document, which contained a detailed statement of the wilderness issue, the goal of the issue, an explanation of decision development and a description of alternatives, were mailed out requesting public comment. This was followed with public distribution of detailed alternative descriptions and four public meetings requesting further comments on issues including wilderness. Since there was a lack of issues or concerns identified, some alternatives were eventually eliminated or combined (see pages 1-9 to 1-11).

In addition to public input, potential resource conflicts were analyzed and alternatives developed by an interdisciplinary team during the land-use planning effort. No significant conflicts were identified in either WSA by this team.

In addition to public involvement throughout the planning process and an initial screening of proposed wilderness alternatives at public meetings, public input was requested prior to initiating this EIS through a formal scoping announcement in the Federal Register. Again, no relevant comments were received.

ISSUES SELECTED FOR ANALYSIS

Although the scoping process described above revealed no potential issues (except impacts on wilderness values) to be of sufficient public concern to warrant their treatment as significant issues, the analysis team (see page LP-1 selected the following issues for analysis.

Timbered Crater WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values

   The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA (including the unique geology, the 1,148-acre Baker Cypress Stand, and two archaeological sites that are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places) could benefit from wilderness designation. These same values may be adversely affected by use and actions that may occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on the Baker Cypress Stand

   1,148 acres within the WSA were designated a natural area in 1965 to protect a stand of Baker Cypress. This species has limited range and very specific site requirements. It would be impacted differently under the different wilderness designation and nondesignation alternatives.

3. Impacts on Timber Harvesting

   There are 400 acres of CFL scattered along the northwest, west, and southwest edge of the WSA. Wilderness designation would impact potential timber sales involving about 200 MMbf (worth about $14,000) every 10 years.

4. Impacts on Recreational Use Levels

   Current recreational use levels include 2,250 VUDs per year, mostly from hunters. This use, primarily by local people, would be affected by the various alternatives.

5. Impacts on Important Archaeological Sites

   Two archaeological sites (a series of house rings and crevice burials and a series of rock cairns and markers referred to as Squaw Trail) are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places and may be affected by the alternatives.

6. Impacts on the Volume of Flat Rock Lava Removed from the WSA

   Based on use in adjacent areas, current demand for decorative flat lava rock is estimated to be about 400 tons per year. Permittees pay BLM $10 per ton for the privilege of removing the rock. This use of the area would be impaired if the area were designated wilderness.

Lava WSA

1. Impacts on Wilderness Values

   The wilderness values of naturalness, opportunities for primitive recreation, and various special features of the WSA (unique geology and a bald eagle nesting site) could benefit from wilderness designation. These same values may be adversely affected by uses and actions that may occur should the WSA not be designated wilderness.

2. Impacts on the Nesting Success of Bald Eagles within the WSA

There is a permanent bald eagle territory where a pair of bald eagles has had good nesting success on the west side of the WSA. Three years ago they produced three eaglets. Last year they failed to nest. Reasons for such differences in their nesting success are not fully understood, but it is believed that wilderness designation or nondesignation could impact the eagles.

3. Impacts on Mule Deer Population Levels

The southern two-thirds of the WSA (about 700 acres) is classified as critical winter range for the Lassen deer herd. This constitutes about nine percent of the crucial winter range of this herd. Some management actions (particularly prescribed burning) that benefit deer would not be allowed under wilderness designation.

4. Impacts on Recreational Use Levels

Current recreational use levels in the Lava WSA include about 8,700 VUDs per year mostly for hunting and fishing. This use, primarily by local people, would be affected by the various alternatives.

5. Impacts on Timber Harvesting

There are 270 acres of CFL in the far northern corner of the WSA. Wilderness designation would impact potential timber sales involving about one MMbf (worth about $70,000) every 20 years.

6. Impacts on the Volume of Flat Lava Rock Removed from the WSA

Based on use in adjacent areas, current demand for flat lava rock is estimated to be about 75 tons per year. Permittees pay BLM $10 per ton for the privilege of removing the rock. This use of the area would be impacted if the area were designated wilderness.

ISSUES CONSIDERED BUT DROPPED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

Timbered Crater WSA

1. Impacts on Livestock Grazing

There is one grazing lease consisting of 125 AUMs on 1,126 acres within the WSA. No range improvements are planned on this lease, and no impacts on its operation are anticipated under any of the alternatives. Therefore, this issue has been dropped from further analysis.

2. Impacts on Three Federally Proposed Threatened and Endangered Plants

Three federally proposed threatened and endangered plants are found on the eastern perimeter of the WSA: eryngium (Eryngium mathiasiae), long-haired star-tulip (Calochortus longebarbatus), and slender Orcutt grass (Orcuttia tenuis). However, because of the inaccessability of the part of the WSA where these plants are located to ORVs and other potentially disturbing activities, no more than very minor impacts to any of these plants are anticipated under any of the alternatives. Therefore, this issue has been dropped from further analysis.

3. Impacts on Potential Geothermal and Oil and Gas Development

Although the geothermal and oil and gas potential of the WSA cannot be precisely determined without further geologic and geophysical study including testing drilling, the Mineral assessment Report for the WSA states that the potential for these resources is low (Peterson and Martin 1981). Within the last six years there have been six geothermal leases and two oil and gas leases issues within the WSA. However, these leases will appear to have been speculative and all of them have either been withdrawn or terminated (for nonpayment). Thus no development of energy resources is anticipated in the WSA, and this issue has been dropped from further analysis.

4. Impacts on Non-Energy Mineral Resources Other than Flat Lava Rock

The mineral report for the WSA (Peterson and Martin 1981) concludes that the area has little mineral potential except for flat-lavas. No mining claims have been filed on lands within the WSA. Therefore, this issue has been dropped from further analysis.

5. Impacts on Vegetation Other than the Baker Cypress and the Three Federally Proposed Threatened and Endangered Plants

An issue dealing with vegetation in general was considered but dropped because no specific impacts on vegetation communities or individual species were identified. Based on projections of development and visitation in the WSA, little or no change in vegetation is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

6. Impacts on Endangered Species

Wildlife and vegetation inventories and analysis of the known ranges of plants and animals did not identify and federally listed threatened or endangered species in the WSA, except for possible casual use of the area by the bald eagles and peregrime falcons. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further analysis.

7. Impacts on Mule Deer Population Levels

About 850 acres along the eastern edge of the WSA are classified as critical winter range for the Day Bench deer herd. However, this constitutes less than three percent of the critical winter range of that herd and, because of the ruggedness of the terrain in that area (due to lava flows), there is little opportunity to improve the habitat and little likelihood that it would be impacted under any of the alternatives. Therefore, this issue was dropped from further analysis.

8. Impacts on Wildlife Other than Mule Deer and Endangered Species

An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified. Based on the projections of development and increased visitation in the WSA, little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

9. Impacts on Water Quality

The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Timber Crater WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. However, this issue was not selected for analysis in this EIS because no measurable impacts on water quality are anticipated under any of the alternatives. The lack of anticipated water quality impacts is due to three considerations:

a. Relatively few land disturbing activities under any of the alternatives (see the Management Actions listed on pages 2-1 through 2-7),

b. the very porous nature of the soil results in very little runoff from the WSA, and

c. the important water bodies south of the WSA (Fall River, Tule River, and Big Lake) derive their water entirely from large springs in that area.

Lava WSA

1. Impacts on Livestock Grazing

The entire Lava WSA is leased to three separate operators whose allotments total 427 AUMs. One of the allottees plans range improvements outside the WSA that may lead to increased stocking levels within the WSA. However, it is anticipated that this increase would be permitted with or without wilderness designation because it would be small (less than 50 AUMs) and not adversely affect the plant communities of the WSA. No other impacts or grazing are anticipated under the alternatives. Therefore, this issue has been dropped from further analysis.

2. Impacts on the Federally Proposed Threatened and Endangered Plant, hedge - hyssop (Gratiola heterosepela)

   The above mentioned plant is found in the southwestern portion of the WSA. However, because ORV access and access for other potentially disturbing activities is difficult, no more than minor impacts to this species are anticipated under any of the alternatives. Therefore, this issue has been dropped from further analysis.

3. Impacts on Vegetation Other than Hedge-Hyssop

   An issue dealing with vegetation in general was considered but dropped because no specific impacts on vegetation communities or individual species were identified. Based on projections of development and visitation in the WSA, little or no change in vegetation is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

4. Impacts on Wildlife Other than Bald Eagles and Mule Deer

   An issue dealing with wildlife in general was considered but not included in this EIS because no specific impacts on populations or the habitat of any specific species were identified. Based on the projections of development and increased visitation in the WSA, little or no change in wildlife populations or habitat is anticipated with wilderness designation or nondesignation.

5. Impacts on Potential Geothermal and Oil and Gas Development

   A mineral resource report for the WSA (Rogers 1982) states that the geothermal resource potential for the area is low. There are no geothermal leases on the area, and the only two (evidently speculative) oil and gas leases were terminated for nonpayment. Therefore, this issue has been dropped from further analysis.

6. Impacts on Non-Energy Mineral Resources Other than Flat Lava Rock

   No mining activity has occurred in the subject area and, according to BLM records, there are no mining claims. There is some potential for the extraction of volcanic cinders for such uses as road construction, but cinders are abundant in the general vicinity on both private and federal lands, and it is anticipated that future demand would be accommodated outside of the WSA with or without wilderness designation. Therefore, this issue has been dropped from further analysis.

7. Impacts on Water Quality

   The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation in the Lava WSA was identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. However, this issue was not selected for analysis in this EIS because no measurable impacts on water quality are anticipated under any of the alternatives. The lack of anticipated water quality impacts is due to two considerations:

a. Relatively few land disturbing activities under any of the alternatives (see the Management Actions listed on pages 2-9 through 2-11),

b. the very porous nature of the soils results in very little runoff from the WSA.

SELECTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS AND DEVELOPMENT OF ALTERNATIVES

Development of the proposed actions is guided by requirements of the Bureau's Planning Regulations, 43 CFR, Part 1600 and the Council on Environmental Quality's Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act. The BLM's Wilderness Study Policy (published February 3, 1982, in the Federal Register) supplements the planning regulations by providing specific factors to be considered during the planning sequence in developing suitability recommendations.

Outlined below are the Proposed Actions and alternatives developed for the Timbered Crater and Lava WSAs.

Timber Crater WSA (Includes the Baker Cypress Instant Study Area)

The Proposed Action for the Timbered Crater WSA is no wilderness. Under this proposal none of the 18,690 acres within the WSA (including the 1,148 acre Baker Cypress Instant Study Area) would be designated wilderness. The entire area would be managed for multiple use as per the management actions described in Chapter 2.

The rationale for this proposal is: (1) the WSA does not contain outstanding wilderness values, (2) the geologic characteristics of the lava formations of this WSA are represented in numerous areas in the general vicinity and are already protected in the Lava Beds National Monument, Lassen Volcanic National Park, and Thousand lakes Wilderness, and (3) the resource values in the WSA are adequately protected by existing programs and regulations.

Two alternatives were also considered - an All Wilderness Alternative and a Partial Wilderness Alternative.

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, all 18,690 acres within the WSA would be designated wilderness. This represents the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended for wilderness designation.

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative, 14,920 acres of the WSA would be designated wilderness; 3,770 acres of the WSA (including the Baker Cypress Instant Study Area) would not be designated but would be managed for multiple use.

Lava WSA

The Proposed Action for the Lava WSA is no wilderness. Under this proposal none of the 11,632 acres within the WSA would be designated wilderness. The entire area would be managed for multiple use as per the management actions described in Chapter 2.

The rationale for this proposal is the same as that for the Timbered Crater WSA, above.

One alternative was also analyzed - an All Wilderness Alternative. Under this alternative, all 11,632 acres within the WSA would be designated wilderness. This represents the maximum possible acreage that could be recommended for wilderness designation.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT DROPPED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS

Timbered Crater WSA

An additional partial wilderness alternative was considered but dropped because there was insufficient rationale to reduce the boundaries and to do so would have made boundary identification more difficult. In addition to the Proposed ACtion (No Wilderness/No Action) two different levels of management intensity were considered. However, as EIS preparation progressed and alternatives and effects were analyzed, it became apparent that there was a close similarity between alternatives and the resulting consequences to the resources. In addition, lack of public concern or support for any particular alternative indicated that the original array of alternatives was not necessary. Therefore, it was decided a lesser array of alternatives would adequately define the issues and provide a clear basis for choice by the decision-makers and the public. it was decided that the No Action/No Wilderness Alternative would simply be BLM's best estimate of what would take place on the area if it were not designated wilderness. Other possibilities under no wilderness are not relevant to the wilderness decisions this EIS addresses.

Lava WSA

A Partial Wilderness alternative was not analyzed in detail because no manageability problems were identified that could be eliminated by a boundary adjustment. Different levels of management intensity under no wilderness were considered but dropped for the same reasons described above for the Timbered Crater WSA.

CHAPTER 2

PROPOSED ACTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

CHAPTER 2

PROPOSED ACTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

Since the pattern of future actions within the WSAs cannot be predicted with certainty, we have made projections of management actions to allow the analysis of impacts under the Proposed Action and alternatives. These projections are the basis of the impacts identified in this EIS. They represent reasonably feasible patterns of activities which could occur under the Proposed Actions alternatives analyzed.

TIMBERED CRATER WSA
(CA-030-201)

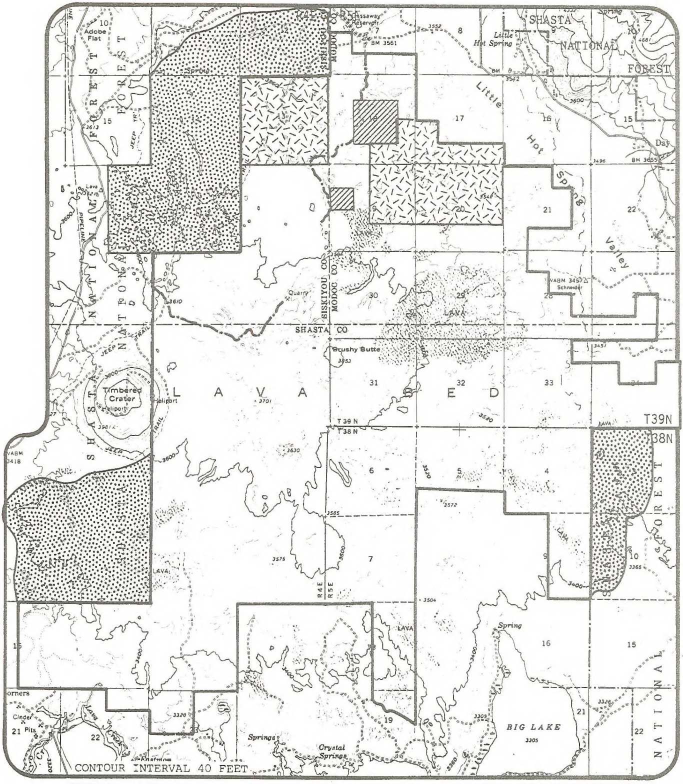
PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION)

Under the Proposed Action none of the 18,690 acres in the Timbered Crater WSA (which includes the Baker Cypress Instant Study Area) are recommended for wilderness designation. These lands (see Map 2-1) would continue to be managed under multiple use. The present management of the area is oriented towards accommodating a limited amount of resource development consistent with the present land use plan. Proposals for surface-disturbing actions are approved only with relatively stringent environmental protection stipulations. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act will be met by complying with the provisions of the Statewide cultural resources PMOA. The most severe restrictions are imposed in the Baker Cypress area, where activities resulting in degradation of the natural/botanical values would not be permitted. Management actions for the area (see below) would include limited timber and fuelwood harvests, removal of small amounts of flat lava rock, installation of wildlife guzzlers, and continued ORV use on about 20 percent of the area.

Timber Management Actions

1. On the 400 acres of CFL scattered along the northwest, west and southwest edges of the WSA, there would be one timber sale of 200 Mbf every 10 years for 100 years. The current on-the-stump value of 200 Mbf is $14,000. These harvests would result in the construction of no new roads. Mitigation measures employed during the harvests would include water barring of skid trails, and no permitting heavy equipment on slopes over 40 percent. No timber stand improvement work is planned.

2. The entire area would be open to fuelwood harvest but actual harvest is limited by the terrain to the western edge and northwest corner of the WSA. The Alturas Resource Area issues permits to the public for fuelwood cutting for $5 per cord. Demand is currently 75 cords per years, and it will increase to 100 cords per year by the year 2000. Access to the cutting areas will be via existing roads and ways.



▬ STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

▨ PRIVATE INHOLDINGS

—·— CHERRY-STEM ROAD

BAKER CYPRESS / LAVA ROCK NATURAL AREA (ISA)

CURRENTLY BEING RE-EVALUATED BY USFS

TIMBERED CRATER WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS)

MAP 2-1

Wildlife Management Actions

3. Three combination big game/small game guzzlers would be developed in the central parts of WSA. Installation of each guzzler would disturb approximately 0.25 acre. They would be positioned and painted so as to blend in with the surrounding terrain, and would generally not be noticeable from over 100 yards away.

Recreation Management Actions

4. The entire area would be open to ORV travel. However, due to the extremely rough terrain, travel is naturally restricted to about 20 percent of the area mostly on north and west edges. Total VUDs would be 2,250 per year, 90 percent of which would be related to deer hunting, the remainder for sightseeing and exploration of geological features.

Grazing Management Actions

None planned - continued authorization of 106 AUMs in Howard's allotment; no developments are planned.

Mineral Development Management Actions

5. The current demand for flat lava rock (400 tons per year) will continue for the foreseeable future. Permittees pay BLM $10 per ton for the privilege of removing the rock. This activity will result in one mile of extension of existing roads over 10 years on the 5,120 acres in the west-central portion of the WSA where the flat rock occurs.

(There are no mining claims on the area and none are anticipated. The 1,148 acre Baker Cypress Natural Area/Instant Study Area has been withdrawn from all forms of appropriation including mining, but not from mineral leasing.)

Energy Development Management Actions

None are anticipated.

Fire Management Actions

6. For wildfires in the interior of the WSA monitor the extent and spread of the fire. No significant resource damage will occur from wildfire in this area. To stop the spread of the fire utilize hand crews to build fire line between existing full breaks such as lava flows, lava tubes, rimrocks, etc. If intensity of fire is too high and threatens resources outside the WSA, use aerial suppression to stop spread. Use of dozers is limited by extremely rock terrain.

Use full fire suppression techniques including aerial suppression and bulldozers to stop fires along the western edge, northern end, and eastern boundary to prevent loss of BLM and adjacent USFS timber resources and to protect private lands in the Little Hot Springs Valley and the Day Bench subdivision.

Land Tenure Adjustment Management Actions

7. Management of the 480 acres of BLM land in Sections 18 and 19, T. 38 N., R. 5 E. (which is surrounded by the Ahjumawi-Lava Springs State Park) would be transferred to the State of California under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative all 18,690 acres of public lands would be designated wilderness. The acreage figure does not include the private inholdings (see Map 2-1), but if they were acquired (see Management Action 6, below) they would automatically be added to the wilderness.

Under All Wilderness the area would be closed to ORV use and there would be no timber harvesting, fuelwood harvesting, or flat lava rock removal.

Timber Management Actions

1. There would be no timber harvesting.

2. No fuelwood harvesting would be permitted.

Wildlife Management Actions

3. Same as Management Action 3 for the Proposed Action, page 2-3.

Recreation Management Actions

4. Entire area would be closed to ORV use by

    - blocking existing roads and trails at 13 locations

    - signing 41 miles of WSA boundary

    - developing three trailheads (total three acres) within WSA at the end of the cherry stemmed road and on the west and east sides of the WSA

    - close the two-mile cherry stemmed road entering from the west.

Grazing Management ACtions

None planned - continued authorization of 106 AUMs.

Mineral Development Management Actions

None planned.

Energy Development Management Actions

None planned.

Fire Management Actions

5. For wildfires in the interior of the proposed wilderness monitor the extent and spread of the fire. No significant resource damage will occur from wildfire in the area. Use aerial suppression techniques to limit spread onto adjacent private lands or onto timbered lands along the western and northern edges of the proposed wilderness area.

Land Tenure Adjustment Management Actions

6. Acquire the existing 195 acres of private inholdings through negotiation.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Lands totaling 14,920 acres would be designated as wilderness to provide legislative preservation of the wilderness characteristics. The remaining 3,770 acres would be managed to maintain existing resource uses (Map 2-2), including the Baker Cypress area which would continue to be managed as a natural area.

The odd-shaped pieces on the east boundary would be eliminated because they are adjacent to cultivated field and pastures and would be difficult to administer. The north boundary, which follows the fire control lines of the 1977 fire, eliminates the 195 acres of private land and the Baker Cypress area. The western boundary follows an existing jeep route and eliminates a forest plantation, allowing forest development practices on the plantation. By eliminating narrow, irregular-shaped parcels and using readily recognizable features as boundaries, lands that would provide the most management unit would be designated wilderness.

Management actions under the Partial Wilderness Alternative would include timber and fuelwood harvests similar to those under the Proposed Action but restricted to the area recommended suitable. The area recommended suitable would be closed to ORV use; no inholdings would be acquired.

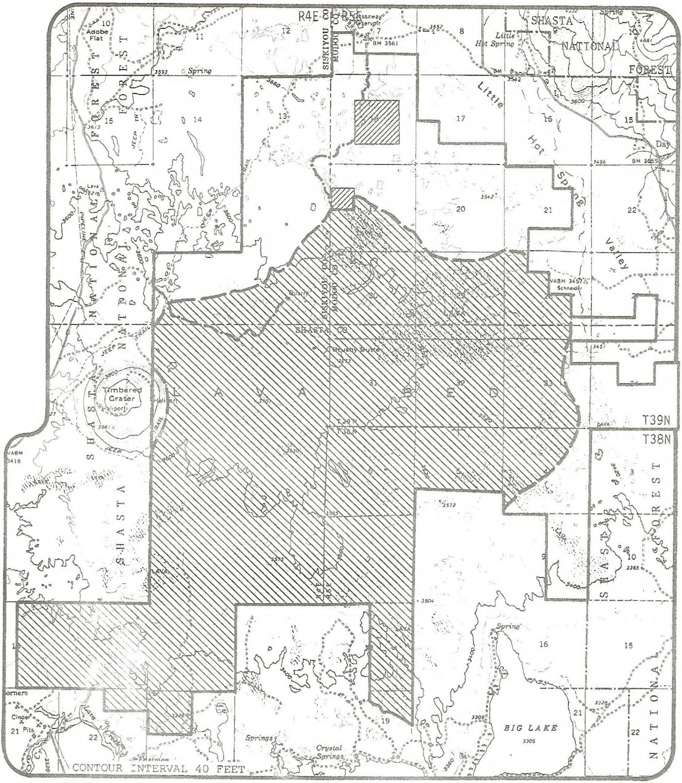
Timber Management Actions

1. Same as Management Action #1 for the Proposed Action, page 2-1, except that one-fourth of the CFL (100 acres) would not be available for harvest reducing the volume and value of each sale to 150 Mbf and $11,500, respectively.

2. Same as Management Action #2 for the Proposed Action except that it would be limited to the area recommended nonsuitable. Volume would be the same because the current supply of fuelwood far exceeds the demand.

Wildlife Management Actions

3. Same as Management Action #3 for the Proposed Action, page 2-3.



▬ STUDY AREA BOUNDARY
▨ PRIVATE INHOLDINGS
CHERRY-STEM ROAD
▨ PARTIAL WILDERNESS

0
SCALE OF MILES

TIMBERED CRATER WILDERNESS STUDY AREA PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

MAP 2-2

Recreation Management Actions

4. The suitable area would be closed to ORV use by

    - blocking roads and trails at seven locations
    - signing 26 miles of boundaries
    - developing two one-acre trailheads, one on the west and one on the east side of the WSA
    - closing one and one-half miles of cherry stemmed roads

Grazing Management Actions

None planned - continued authorization of 106 AUMs.

Mineral Development Management Actions

None planned.

Energy Development Management Actions

None planned.

Fire Management Actions

5. For wildfires in the interior of the proposed wilderness monitor the extent and spread of the fire. No significant resource damage will occur from wildfire in this area. If intensity of fire is too high and threatens resources outside the WSA, use aerial suppression techniques only to stop spread. Use full fire suppression techniques including aerial suppression and bulldozers to stop fires along the western edge, northern end, and eastern boundary to prevent loss of BLM and adjacent USFS timber resources and to protect private lands in the Little Hot Springs Valley and the Day Bench subdivision.

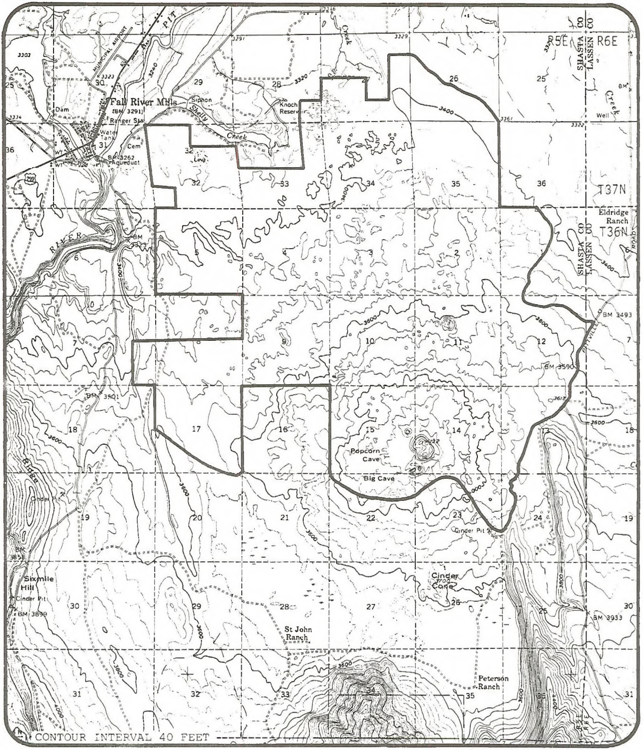
Land Tenure Adjustment Management Actions

None planned.

LAVA WSA
(CA-030-203)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION)

Under the Proposed Action none of the 11,632 acres in the Lava WSA are recommended for wilderness designation. These lands (see Map 2-3) would continue to be managed under multiple use. Management Actions for the



STUDY AREA BOUNDARY

0

SCALE OF MILES

MAP 2-3

LAVA

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

PROPOSED ACTION

(NO WILDERNESS)

area (see below) would include limited timber and fuelwood harvests, protection of a bald eagle nesting site, a prescribed burn, construction of a powerline, removal of small amounts of flat lava rock, and continued ORV use on about 10 percent of the area.

Vegetation Management Actions

1. Prescribe burn 500 acres of deer winter range in the southern two-thirds of the WSA within the next 10 years.

Timber Management Action

2. On the 270 acres of CFL in northern corner of the WSA, there would be one sale of 1.0 MMbf every 20 years for 100 years. Current on-the-stump value of 1.0 MMbf is $70,000. These harvests would result in the construction of one mile of road. Mitigation employed during the harvests would include water barring of skid trails and not permitting heavy equipment on slopes over 40 percent. No timber stand improvement work is planned except as noted in Management Action #4, below.

3. The entire area (except for the 150 acres noted in Management Action #4, below) would be open to fuelwood harvest, which is excepted to remain at 75 cord per year worth $5 per cord. Access would be via existing roads and ways.

Wildlife Management Actions

4. To protect the bald eagle nest site located in Section 5 on the west side of the WSA:

   - 150 acres surrounding the six nest and potential nest trees would be closed to fuel gathering and ORV use

   - there would be mechanical fuel reduction on a total of three acres in the vicinity of the nest trees

   - ten acres of ponderosa pine in the vicinity would be thinned to promote the development of future nest sites.

Recreation Management Actions

5. The entire area, except for the 150 acres referred to in Management Action #4, above, would be open to ORV travel. However, due to the extremely rough terrain, travel is naturally restricted to about 10 percent of the WSA mostly along the western edge. Total VUDs are expected to remain at 8,700 per year (60 percent for deer and quail hunting with the rest split between fishing and sightseeing/camping. 1,700 of the VUDs are dependent on ORV use).

Grazing Management Actions

6. Continuation of the current three leases, which total 400 AUMs on the 11,632 acres of the WSA (28 AUMs on these leases are attributed to part of the leases outside the WSA).

Utility Corridor Management Actions

7. Anticipate in next 10 years, one 115 Kv powerline across 4.5 miles of the WSA near the southern boundary.

Mineral Development Management Actions

8. The current demand for flat lava rock (75 tons per year) would remain constant for the foreseeable future. This activity will result in 0.5 miles of extension of existing roads on the 520 acres where the flat rock occurs in the southwest corner of the WSA.

   (There are no mining claims on the area and none are anticipated.)

Energy Development Management Actions

None anticipated.

Fire Management Actions

9. Access for bulldozers is extremely limited due to terrain. Heavy fuel loading dictates immediate suppression activities for most fires due to the adjacent subdivided private lands to the west. Use hand crews and aerial suppression techniques to build hand line between natural fire breaks and slow rate of spread.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative all 11,632 acres within the WSA (see Map 2-3) would be designated wilderness. Although the bald eagle nesting site would be protected as under the Proposed Action, there would be no timber or fuelwood harvests, no flat lava rock removal, no powerline construction, and no ORV use.

Vegetation Management Actions

None planned.

Timber Management Actions

1. No timber harvests and no fuelwood harvests.

Wildlife Management Actions

2. Same as Management Action #4 for the Proposed Action, page 2-9.

Recreation Management Actions

3. Entire area would be closed to ORV use by

   - blocking trails/roads at four locations

   - developing two trailheads, one acre each, one at south boundary and one in northeast corner

   - signing 25 miles of boundary.

   This would involve the loss of 1,700 VUDs per year.

Grazing Management Actions

4. Same as Management Action #6 for the Proposed Action, page 2-10.

Utility Corridor Management Actions

None planned.

Mineral Development Management Actions

None planned.

Energy Development Management Actions

None planned.

Fire Management Actions

5. Same as Management Action #9 for the Proposed Action, page 2-10, except use of hand crews is limited and potential use of bulldozers in some areas is eliminated. Suppression is limited to aerial techniques only.

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS

Tables 2-1 and 2-2 provide a comparative summary of the major impacts of the Proposed Actions and Alternatives.

TABLE 2-1. COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES FOR THE TIMBERED CRATER WSA

Issue	Proposed Action No Wilderness	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative
Impact on Wilderness Values	The 20 percent of the area that is accessible to ORV would experience temporary disruptions of naturalness over much of its geographic extent from ORV use and such activities as timber harvesting, fuelwood harvesting, and the removal of flat lava rock. Within this area the disruption of naturalness would be relatively permanent on 10 acres per year from the removal of flat rock and would last about five years on an average of 25 acres per year from fuelwood and timber harvesting. Impacts on opportunities for solitude would be similar to those described for naturalness. Both naturalness and solitude would be preserved quite well on the 80 percent of the area that is inaccessible. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are limited in the WSA. They would remain available, however, for those willing to avoid the above mentioned disturbances or hike into the parts of the WSA that are inaccessible to ORVs.	Wilderness values would be well protected under this alternative. Naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be reduced on less than 20 acres from wildlife guzzlers and development designated to prevent ORV use of the area. The limited existing opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be retained and the special features of the WSA would be either unaffected or enhanced.	Under this alternative wilderness values would be well protected on about 85 percent of the WSA. On the remaining 15 percent (the accessible portion of the area recommended nonsuitable) impacts on naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be similar to those described for the Proposed Action expect that none of the impacts would last more than about five years because there would be no removal of flat lava rock. The limited opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be diminished slightly by the activities affecting naturalness (timber harvest, fuelwood harvest, guzzler installation, etc.) but those who want primitive camping experience, for example, could easily find it by avoiding disturbed areas. The geology of the area would not be impacted. Impacts on the other special features - Baker cypress stand and archaeological sites - would be as described below for those issues.

TABLE 2-1 (Cont.)

Issue	Proposed Action No Wilderness	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative
Wilderness Values (cont.)	The geology of the area would not be impacted. Impacts on the other special feature - the Baker cypress stand and archaeological sites - would be as described below for those issues.		
Impacts on the Baker Cypress Stand	Less than 10 individual trees would be damaged or destroyed by ORVs annually. This would be more than counterbalanced by a relatively high level of fire protection.	There would be no damage from ORVs, but a lower level of fire protection. Acquisition of inholdings would increase the percentage of the stand that could be protected to about 16 percent.	Impacts would be the same as under the Proposed Action.
Impacts on Timber Harvesting	There would be one timber sale of about 200 Mbf every 10 years and, by the year 2000, a fuelwood harvest of about 100 cords per year. Although this could be significant to individual local residents, it would not be significant in terms of the local economy.	There would be no timber or fuelwood harvesting within the WSA.	Impacts would be the same as under the Proposed Action, except that the harvest every 10 years would be reduced by 25 percent to 150 Mfb.
Impacts on Recreational Use Levels	There would be a minor increase in recreational use to about 2,300 visitor days per year.	Reduced recreational use due to the prohibition of ORVs would be partially offset by the attraction of a designated wilderness and increased game bird populations. The net result would be a 25 percent decline in recreational use to about 1,600 visitor days per year.	Impacts would be the same as under the All Wilderness Alternative, except that because of only partial elimination of ORV use, recreational use would only decline 10 percent to about 2,000 visitor days per year.

TABLE 2-1 (Cont.)

Issue	Proposed Action No Wilderness	All Wilderness Alternative	Partial Wilderness Alternative
Impacts on Important Archaeological Sites	There would be moderate damage to at least one important archaeological sites (known or unknown in the next 15 years), the largest threats being flat lava rock removal and ORV use.	The archaeological sites would be protected.	There would be negligible damage to one important but currently unknown archaeological iste in the next 15 years. Known sites would be protected.
Impacts on Volume of Flat Lava Rock Removal	About 400 tons of flat lava rock would be removed each year. This would not be important to the local economy.	There would be no removal of flat lava rock from within the WSA.	There would be no removal of flat lava rock from within the WSA.

TABLE 2-2. COMPARISON OF IMPACTS OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVE FOR THE LAVA WSA

Issues	Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative
Impacts on Wilderness Values	The 10 percent of the area that is accessible to ORV would experience temporary disruptions of naturalness over much of its geographic extent from ORV use and such activities as timber harvesting, fuelwood harvesting, and the removal of flat lava rock. Within this area the the disruption of naturalness would be relatively permanent on 10 acres per year from the removal of flat lava rock and would last about five years on an average of 20 acres per year from fuelwood and timber harvesting. Impacts on opportunities for solitude would be similar to those described for naturalness. Both naturalness and solitude would be preserved quite well on the 90 percent of the area that is inaccessible. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation in the WSA would remain available for those willing to avoid the above mentioned disturbances or hike into the parts of the WSA that are inaccessible to ORVs. The geology of the area would not be impacted. Impacts on the other special feature - the bald eagle nest site- would be as described below for that issue.	Wilderness values would be well protected under this alternative. Naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be reduced on less than 15 acres from development designed to prevent ORV use of the area. The limited existing opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be retained and the special features of the WSA would be either unaffected or enhanced.

TABLE 2-2 (Cont.)

Issues	Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative
Impacts on Nesting Success of Bald Eagles	It is predicted that the eagle nesting site will regain its productivity within three years. Management actions such as timber and fuelwood harvesting, prescribed burning, flat lava rock removal, limited ORV use, and powerline construction would have only negligible impacts on the eagles.	It is predicted that the eagle nesting would regain its productivity within three years.
Impacts on Mule Deer Population Levels	Winter and fall deer populations within the WSA would increase by from two to five percent (to a maximum of 620 and 520 deer, respectively) over the next 10 years because of planned vegetation manipulations.	Fall deer population levels within the WSA would remain at 200 to 500 animals, the winter population would remain at 300 to 600.
Impacts on Recreational Use Levels	Recreation use levels would remain at about 8,700 visitor days per year.	Recreational use levels would decrease to about 7,500 visitor days per year because of the ORV prohibition which would be only partially offset by the increased attraction of wilderness designation and the eagles.
Impacts on Timber Harvesting	There would be one timber sale of about 1.0 MMbf every 20 years and a fuelwood harvest of about 75 cords per year. Although this could be significant to individual local residents, it would not be significant in terms of the local economy.	There would be no timber or fuelwood harvesting within the WSA.

TABLE 2-2 (Cont.)

Issues	Proposed Action (No Wilderness)	All Wilderness Alternative
Impacts on the Volume of Flat Lava Rock Removed	About 75 tons of flat lava rock would be removed each year. This would not be important to the local economy.	There would be no removal of flat lava rock from within the WSA.

CHAPTER 3

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER 3

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This chapter briefly describes each WSA and the resources that would be impacted by the proposed actions and alternatives. Descriptions are only as detailed as needed for the reader to understand the effects of implementing the proposed actions and alternatives. Where impacts to resources would be slight or nonexistent, descriptions are brief or are omitted (see page 1-6 for a discussion of issues considered but dropped from further analysis).

More detailed descriptions of the resources in the study area and of regional socioeconomic conditions appear in the planning documents for the resource area. Copies of these documents may be reviewed in the Susanville District Office, Susanville, California.

TIMBERED CRATER WSA
(CA-030-201)

The Timbered Crater WSA (which includes the Baker Cypress Instant Study Area) is located in eastern Shasta County approximately 10 miles north of Fall River Mills. It is approximately six hours driving time from the Sacramento metropolitan area, four hours from Reno, and eight hours from the San Francisco area. The WSA is bounded on the northeast by private agricultural lands in the Little Hot Springs Valley. The southern boundary lies adjacent to the State of California's 5,890-acre Ahjumawi-Lava Springs State Park. The remaining portions are adjacent to portions of the Shasta National Forest administered by the Lassen National Forest. Three portions of the adjacent Forest Service lands were included in a large national package of lands "Administratively Endorsed for Wilderness" as part of the RARE II process (Map 2-1). However, these parcels will not become wilderness if Timber Crater is found unsuitable, as they cannot stand alone (see page 5-1).

Most of the WSA consists of public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Two parcels, totalling 195 acres, are owned by Roseburg Lumber Company and are located in the north end of the unit. The total net area administered by the BLM is 18,690 acres.

The dominant feature in this area is the large crater on the west boundary. It lies mostly outside the unit with only the east edge on BLM lands. Its slopes are covered with grasses, manzanita brush, and ponderosa pine. The remainder of the unit consists of a large lava flow, which has not yet developed deep soils and is still rocky, rough, and difficult to traverse. The general topography of the lava flow is characterized by low buttes, shallow depressions, and drainages (Photo 3-1).

Photo 3-1. Timbered Crater WSA. The scattered ponderosa pine, brushland, juniper and lava flows near the cherry stem road on the west side are typical of much of the WSA.

WILDERNESS VALUES

Naturalness

This area is essentially natural in character due primarily to its harsh, rocky, and difficult-to-traverse terrain. During the Horr's Corner fire in 1977, several firebreaks were constructed across the lava flow. The resultant disturbance of the natural lava rock is apparent but was determined to be an impact that could be substantially unnoticeable with the passage of time. The native brush species are gradually growing back over the fire trails.

Some flat rock mining and evidence of past logging are within the WSA, and two cherry stem roads having a combined length of approximately five miles are located in the northwest portion of the WSA (see Map 2-1).

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The size of the area, the broken topography, and the availability of vegetation screening create opportunities for solitude in the WSA. Primitive recreation opportunities are not outstanding; there are no unique or high quality recreation resources. Neither the solitude nor the recreation available are exceptional in northern California where numerous such opportunities.

Special Features

The Timber Crater Wilderness Study Area provides opportunities for botanical, geological, and limited archaeological studies. The unit consists of a large lava flow, which has not yet developed deep soils. A stand of Baker cypress (1,148 acres) is found within the unit. *Cupressus bakeri* is restricted to a small number of groves spread along the Cascade-Sierra mountains of northern California and extending into southern Oregon. The Timbered Crater WSA has part of the largest contiguous stand of Baker cypress (7,000 acres) and is the most accessible for study. The Baker cypress stand has been previously designated as a Natural Area and an Instant Wilderness Study Area.

VEGETATION

Natural vegetation on the lava flow consists of ponderosa pine, Digger pine, oak, juniper, and dense to scattered mountain shrub (see Photo 3-1). Three Federal proposed threatened and endangered plants are found on the eastern perimeter of the WSA: Eryngium (*Eryngim mathiasiae*), Long-haired Star-tulip (*Calochortus longebarbatus*), and Slender Orcutt Grass (*Orcuttia tenuis*). this WSA is within the Sierra Forest Province-western ponderosa pine ecosystem (Bailey/Kuchler 1978).

Baker Cypress Instant Study Area

A stand of Baker cypress is found within the northern portion of this unit, of which 1,148 acres were officially designated as a natural area in 1965. The natural area designation was established to protect the Baker cypress, a species with limited range and very specific site requirements. The area has been withdrawn from all forms of appropriation including mining, but not from mineral leasing. It is an Instant Study Area (ISA), and is being studied as a part of the Timbered Crater WSA (Map 2-1).

The Baker cypress stand, which includes about 6,000 acres in addition to the ISA, is the largest area of this species known in the United States. This area can properly be considered a "stand," whereas the other smaller locations are more or less isolated groves where a continuous cover of cypress exists. The stand grows on a rough surface of lava bed material. Many of the lava faults and depressions are filled with alluvial material which produces a close association of ponderosa pine, incense cedar, Baker cypress and various brush species.

Timber

There about about 400 acres of commercial forest land (CFL) scattered along the northwest, west, and southwest edges of the WSA. The primary species is ponderosa pine. There is potential for the sale of about 200 Mbf every 10 years.

WILFLIFE

The entire unit is classified as general deer winter range. About 850 acres along the eastern edge are classified as crucial deer winter range. This accounts for about 2.5 percent of the total Day Bench deer herd crucial winter range acreage as most of the acreage being utilized occurs outside of the study area. Little hunting occurs within the area due to the late seasonal migration of the herd into this area.

Some incidental use by pronghorn antelope of the Big Valley Subherd, occurs occurs along the northeastern boundary of the WSA. Numerous passerine birds such as Townsend's solitaires, robins, towhees, Clark's nutcrackers, scrub and Steller's jays, plain tit mice and numerous sparrow species are common.

Raptor species common to the WSA include red-tailed hawks, American kestrels, Cooper's hawks, sharp-shinned hawks, Steven hawks, and an occasional goshawk from adjacent areas of heavy timber. A colony of ospreys nest along the northeast shore of Big Lake and incidental use of the WSA by this species may occur. Other wildlife in the area include California and mountain quail, the ranges of which are limited by lack of water throughout most of the WSA, bobcats coyotes, jackrabbits, cottontail rabbits, porcupines, and badgers.

The WSA is adjacent to a bald eagle nest territory which is on USFS land about one mile southeast of the WSA. Foraging areas for the territory are located at Big Lake and Horn Pond. Some casual use by bald eagles may occur within the WSA, but is incidental to the life cycle requirements of this nesting pair.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The WSA is considered to possess average scenic quality for the region. As a whole, it does not contain any exceptionally attractive landform or vegetation characteristics. In addition, the sensitivity to visual change of the public that views the area is rated to be relatively low. Using these primary indicators, scenic quality and viewer sensitivity, the area would rate a VRM Class IV classification, i.e., visual changes that are created by management actions may attract attention and be a dominant feature in the landscape, but should repeat the form, line, color, and texture of the landscape.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

There are five recorded and one unrecorded archaeological sites within the WSA. Friedman (1977) undertook an intuitive survey of approximately 15-20 percent of the area.

One site (SHA-561) was recorded on the east leg of the Green Place Reservoir, a seasonal lake during aboriginal occupation (Derby, personal communication 1976). The site is a surface lithic scatter of moderate density, including two desert side-notched projectile points.

The second site is a rock cairn built at the edge of a lava tube (SHA-562). It does not appear to be ancient, and may have been built recently as a marker for the nearby underground cave.

MOD-264 is a sinkhole 15-20 meters in diameter with water and nearby scatterd obsidian chippage.

By far the largest and most significant site is MOD-265 which contains 43 stone house rings. These rings range in diameter from 2.5 to 7.5 meters and are up to 65 centimeters high. Various chipped and ground stone artifacts are present.

MOD-266 is a large stone ring 7.7 meters in diameter with scattered chippage and points. The site record indicates a local rancher reported this to be an historic "Indian meeting ground."

An unrecorded feature of interest in the eastern region of Timbered Crater is an aboriginal trail. Located in a rocky, very rough concentration of basalt, the trail is marked by rock cairns at intervals of 15 feet or more. In some areas the rock pavement seems to have been polished smooth, possibly the result of long use of the marked trail. Although the trail was not followed to its total extent, approximately 30 rock cairns and markers were counted. The path seems to follow the easiest route through the rough terrain, and may well have been used by the aboriginal residents who traveled across this area. It originally was suggested that the trail was the end product of a Boy Scout map exercise. The cairns, however, appear to be too securely made and too extensive to have been casually built.

The paucity of archaeological resources reinforces the intuitive observation that Timbered Crater would have been an uninviting spot for habitation by aboriginal residents. The continuous jumble of angular rocks makes travel within the area very difficult. The scarcity of vegetation and, therefore, of faunal species, would mitigate against use by hunting and gathering peoples. The presence of the "trail" suggests that it often may have been necessary to traverse the area; nothing, however, is present to suggest that Timbered Crater was used extensively. It would appear to suggest that MOD-265, the "trail" and possibly MOD-266 are eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places because of their complexity, uniqueness, research value and heritage interest. There has been some past vandalism on MOD-265. However, there are no known resource uses affecting or degrading these cultural sites.

RECREATION

This area fields minor recreation use with an occasional hiker or hunter being observed in the area. Most recreation consists of hunting plus limited off-road vehicle use and occasional exploration of caves and lava tubes. The adjacent lands to the south of the unit were purchased by the State of California for the purpose of recreational use around Big Lake (Ahjumawi-Lava Springs State Park). Estimates of visitor use total 2,250 visitor days annually, of which 50 percent is dependent on the use of ORVs.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

One cattle grazing lease is within the WSA. The lease totals 1,126 acres and is found in Sections 28, 33, and 34 on the eastern edge of the WSA. The lease supports 125 animal unit months (AUMs). Management is at a relatively low level with few improvements and no increases in capacity planned.

ENERGY AND NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES

The U.S. Bureau of Mines and U.S. Geological Survey prepared a Mineral Land Assessment Report for the WSA (Peterson and Martin 1981). The report concludes that the area has little mineral potential except for flat-lavas used in building construction. The geothermal potential of the area cannot be precisely determined except by further geological and geophysical study. However, it is considered to be low.

Recent interest in geothermal exploration has developed in the vicinity of the Timbered Crater WSA. The Lassen National Forest has completed an environmental assessment of the impacts of geothermal exploration in the Timbered Crater WSA and adjacent Forest Service lands. Six geothermal lease applications were on file involving lands within the WSA (11,883 acres). However, two of these were terminated due to nonpayment and two of the applications were withdrawn by the lessee, all in 1983.

No mining claims have been filed on lands within the WSA. Several permits for removal of ornamental flat rock were issued prior to 1970. Since this kind of material is readily available on private lands, and the material available on public lands is limited and of low economic value, sale of this material from public lands was discontinued. Two noncompetitive oil and gas leases (3,200 acres) occurred within the study area. However, one was terminated due to nonpayment and the other was withdrawn by the applicant.

LAVA WSA
(CA-030-203)

The Lava WSA is located about one-half mile southeast of the town of Fall River Mills in eastern Shasta County. It is approximately six hours driving time from the Sacramento metropolitan area, four hours from Reno, and eight hours from the San Francisco area. The WSA is bounded by private lands on the north; a road and private lands on the northeast, east, and southeast; and public lands and a gravel-surfaced county road on the south. The western portion borders private land.

This unit is comprised entirely of BLM-administered lands with no private inholdings. The total area is 11,632 acres.

The general appearance of this WSA is similar to that of the Timbered Crater WSA (Photo 3-2). Its topography consists of an old lava flow dominated by a prominent butte. The butte is located on the southern end of the unit and rises 500 to 700 feet above the general elevation of the surrounding terrain. The ground surface is rocky and broken with buttes and broad depressions formed as a result of the cooling of lava flows. Several lava tubes and caves are found near the south boundary and are part of an existing undeveloped recreation site.

WILDERNESS VALUES

Naturalness

The WSA is essentially natural in character. Several vehicle routes have been established by occasional vehicle use, two wildlife guzzlers are present, and there is a limited amount of livestock fencing that can be found. None of these constitute significant intrusion on the naturalness of the area.

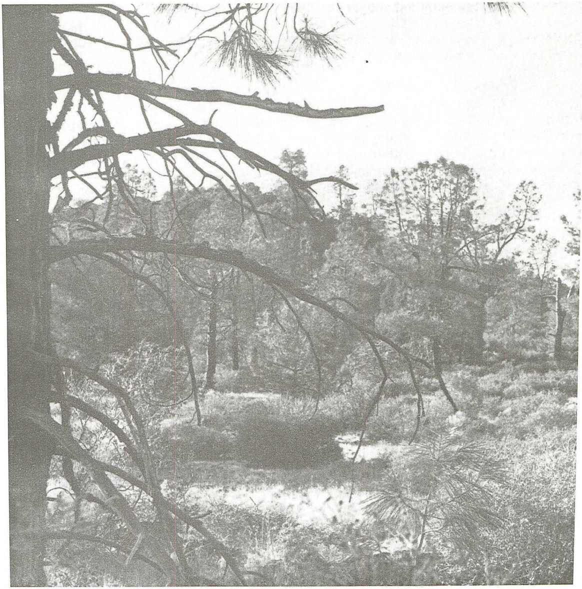


Photo 3-2. Lava WSA - showing digger pine and Ceanothus brushland near Popcorn Cave along the southern boundary of WSA.

Opportunities for Solitude and Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The WSA offers outstanding opportunities for solitude in a major portion of the WSA. This is affected to a minor degree in the northwestern part by the proximity of the sights and sounds of Fall River Mills. The topography is broken enough and there is adequate vegetative screening to offer the visitor chances to avoid other people.

Hunting quality for deer and upland game is relatively high, and opportunities for hiking and primitive camping exist. The relatively low level of current use indicates that the recreation values are not exceptional.

Special Features

The Lava WSA provides an opportunity to study geologic features. The ground surface is rocky and broken with buttes and broad depressions formed as a result of the cooling of lava flows. Several lava tubes and caves are found near the south boundary.

Another special feature is the bald eagle nesting site on the west side of the WSA. During most of the last 10 years a pair of eagles has been successful in raising one to three eaglets.

VEGETATION

Vegetation consists of sagebrush, manzanita, and oak brush with scattered juniper and digger pine. This WSA is within the Sierra Forest Province--oak-juniper woodland ecosystem (Bailey/Kuchler, 1978). One federally proposed threatened and endangered plant hedge-hyssop (Gratiola heterosepela) is found on the southwest portion of the WSA. Scattered patches of Baker cypress totalling about 1,400 acres are found throughout the WSA.

WILDLIFE

The southern half of the WSA, approximately 7,000 acres, is classified as crucial deer winter range, while the rest of the area is general deer winter range. The WSA provides about nine percent of the total crucial winter range of the Lassen deer herd. It is estimated that 300 to 600 deer use this critical habitat each winter. Fall populations for the entire WSA are estimated to fluctuate between 200 and 500 deer. Some proposals have been made by the State Fish and Game Department to increase available forage for wildlife within the WSA. Portions of the area were withdrawn from certain disposal statutes in 1962 (27,492 acres) and are managed for use as a cooperative wildlife area with the California Department of Fish and Game. Management goals are to increase forage production for deer and livestock. Vegetative manipulation is the principal management tool to accomplish these goals. Quail habitat enhancement is a secondary goal. Past projects have included development of a guzzler for watering birds and small mammals, a 120-acres hand brush manipulation project to encourage brush sprouting for deer forage, and a 50-acre seeding to increase livestock forage.

The WSA contains a relatively high density of mountain and California quail. A small population of wild turkeys is reported in the area along with numerous species of passerine birds similar to those found in Timbered Crater. Coyotes, bobcats, jackrabbits, cottontail rabbits, porcupines and badgers also requent the WSA. Raptors common to the WSA include red-tailed hawks, American kestrels, and Coopers and sharp-shinned hawks.

A bald eagle nest territory in the northwest corner of the WSA has been active and productive for at least the last 10 years, with the exception of 1985 and 1986. These eagles use a wide prey base including rabbits, small rodents, waterfowl, and fish. Water related prey is the primary diet of the pair and is available from the Pit River south of Fall River Mills. This proximity of the river is the key to the location of the territory.

VISUAL RESOURCES

The visual resources of the Lava WSA are the same as those described for the Timbered Crater WSA on page 3-5.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Only a very small portion (1-2 percent) of this area has been inventoried. No known sites are present. Landform, vegetation, and water resource availability suggest there are few cultural resources within the area.

RECREATION

Three primitive campgrounds, consisting of fire rings and an outhouse, lie within the WSA and are no longer maintained due to lack of funding and low level of use. The sites are still being used by deer hunters. The area receives little use from ORV operators due to the rugged terrain. Several caves and lava tubes found within the area attract special interest recreationists, occurring mostly in the form of hunting, camping, and hiking; annual use is estimated at 8,700 visitor days.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

The entire WSA is presently leased for cattle grazing by three separate livestock operators for a total of 427 animal unit months. Some fencing and livestock water developments are present within the WSA, but do not detract from natural characteristics of the area. No extensive development or increases in grazing capacity are planned.

ENERGY AND NON-ENERGY MINERAL RESOURCES

A mineral resource report (Rogers 1982) has been completed for the WSA. The area has negligible mineral potential except for volcanic cinders and lava rock used in construction and for decorative purposes. The true geothermal potential of the area cannot be determined except by further geologic and geophysical study. The entire study area has been classified by the U.S.

Minerals Management Service as "prospectively valuable for geothermal steam and associated geothermal resources." The geothermal resource potential is considered to be low. The Minerals Management Service has further determined that "the lands are without value for other leasable minerals."

No known mining activity has occurred within the subject area. The 1977 Bureau of Mines MILS data show no mines or prospects in the WSA. There are no mining claims located within this area according to California BLM records.

Two noncompetitive oil and gas leases (3,640 acres) has been issued in the northernmost and southernmost portions of the WSA but have since been terminated due to nonpayment.

Five cinder cones are present in the subject area--two in Section 11, two in Section 14, and one primarily in Section 15. The major uses for volcanic cinders are for road base construction and lightweight concrete aggregate. Minor uses include decorative landscaping and cindering of roads during the winter. Sources of cinders are abundant in this area, both on private and Federal lands. The lava rock in the WSA could theoretically be utilized for decorative or building purposes. There are, however, no indications that any of the stone in the WSA has been used for these purposes. Flat lava rock, which is considered especially valuable for building construction, does not occur in concentrated quantities in the study area.

CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter focuses directly on the issues identified in Chapter 1. For each WSA the environmental impacts of the management actions included in the Proposed Action and each alternative are described issue by issue. The environmental impacts of these alternatives on the areas' other resources have also been analyzed and have been found to be insignificant. To understand this analysis the management actions of each proposed action and alternative must be understood (see Chapter 2)

There are no separate headings in this chapter for mitigating measures or cumulative impacts. All potential mitigating measures have been incorporated in the proposed actions and alternatives; no new measures were developed during the analysis. Cumulative impacts have been specifically discussed by the interdisciplinary team and, where appropriate, incorporated into the analysis below.

Because of the general nature of this analysis and the lack of numerical and statistical information regarding the areas' resources, impacts in this chapter are often expressed in relative terms. For the purpose of this analysis the meanings of these terms are as follows:

- Negligible impact - the degree of anticipated environmental impact is considered less than minor.

- Minor impact - comparatively unimportant; in terms of the area's wildlife resources, a minor impact is one affecting a specific group of individuals of a population in a localized area for one generation or less; the integrity of the regional population is not likely to be affected.

- Moderate impact - an affect sufficient enough to cause a change in the abundance of a resource or its distribution. In terms of the area's wildlife, the abundance or distribution of a portion of the regional or local population would change over more than one generation, but would not affect the integrity of the regional population as a whole.

- Major impact - an effect sufficient enough to cause a decline in the abundance of a resource or a change in distribution of a resource. In terms of the area's wildlife, the abundance or distribution of the regional or local population of a species would decline beyond which natural recruitment would not likely return that population to its former level within several generations.

TIMBERED CRATER WSA
(CA-030-201)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION)

Under this proposal, none of the 18,690 acres of the Timbered Crater WSA (which includes the Baker Cypress Instant Study Area) would be designated wilderness.

The primary impacts under this proposal relate to wilderness values and archaeological resources.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

None of the WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation and none of the wilderness values on 18,690 acres would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. Wilderness values would, for the most part, be retained because of the natural ruggedness of the area, which limits access, and required mitigations for timber harvest and other permitted activities.

- Naturalness

All of the management actions listed on pages 2-1 through 2-3 would have an adverse impact on naturalness in localized portions of the WSA. However, because of the ruggedness and natural inaccessibility of much of the area (ORVs can only operate on about 20 percent of the WSA), overall impacts on naturalness would be minor.

Naturalness would be impaired every 10 years during the actual harvesting of timber. The noise and activity related to timber cutting would destroy naturalness for those using the area for other purposes. Although only about 40 acres would be harvested at a time, the noise and visual aspects of the disturbance would spread out to a much larger area, probably about 200 acres depending among other things on the length and location of the access roads.

On the 40 acres actually harvested, there would be a more permanent impact on naturalness. This impact, however, would not be severe since clearcuts are not planned and a substantial number of trees would be left after each harvest. Also, as revegetation occurred the naturalness of the areas harvested would gradually improve, probably being completely restored after 5 to 10 years.

Fuelwood harvests would have an impact on naturalness similar to that of timber harvests and would impact temporarily (during harvest) about 100 acres per year and more permanently about 20 acres (the area actually harvested) per year.

The three wildlife guzzlers would by their appearance (despite efforts to paint and position them so they would blend in) reduce naturalness on not more than three acres. They would, over a much greater area, probably several hundred acres, enhance naturalness by increasing the abundance of (and, therefore, the opportunity to observe) quail and other wildlife.

ORV use would periodically destroy naturalness on 20 percent of the area, but only a very small part of the area (less than one percent) would be affected at any one time and the impact would be mostly temporary -- it (the impact) would leave when the ORVs did, except for minor damage that would be done to vegetation and, perhaps, other resources.

Removal of flat lava rock would permanently destroy naturalness on about 10 acres per year and would temporarily (during the actual removal process) disturb about 50 acres.

Fire fighting efforts (Management Action 6, page 2-3) also have the potential to destroy naturalness in those limited areas where it is physically possible to use heavy equipment. Because the occurrence, location, and size of future fires are not known, no estimate of the acreage that would be disturbed by fire fighting efforts has been made.

- Solitude

Impacts on opportunities for solitude would closely mirror those described above for naturalness. When naturalness is disrupted, it is difficult or impossible to have a feeling of solitude. However, since almost all of the disturbing activities are confined to the 20 percent of the WSA that is accessible, outstanding opportunities for solitude remain in the more rugged portions of the WSA and are easily available to those who seek them

- Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are quite limited (see page 3-3). Those opportunities that do exist would be somewhat diminished by the activities described under "Naturalness," above, but those who wanted a primitive camping experience, for example, could find it by avoiding the disturbed areas or by hiking into the 80 percent of the area that is inaccessible to ORVs.

- Special Features

The special features of the Timbered Crater WSA are its geological (lava flow) characteristics, the Baker cypress stand, and several important archaeological sites.

The geology of the area would not be impacted by the Proposed Action.

Less than 100 individual trees within the Baker cypress stand would be damaged or destroyed by ORVs each year. This impact would be counterbalanced by the benefit to the stand of a relatively high level of fire protection.

There would be moderate damage to at least one important archaeological site (known or unknown) in the next 15 years, the largest threats being from flat lava rock removal and ORV use.

Conclusion:

The 20 percent of the area that is accessible to ORVs would experience temporary disruptions of naturalness over much of its geographic extent from ORV use and such activities as timber harvesting, fuelwood harvesting, and the removal of flat lava rock. Within this area the disruption of naturalness would be relatively permanent on 10 acres per year from the removal of flat lava rock and would last about five years on an average of 25 acres per year from fuelwood and timber harvesting.

Impacts on opportunities for solitude would be similar to those described for naturalness. Both naturalness and solitude would be preserved quite well on the 80 percent of the area that is inaccessible.

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are limited in the WSA. They would remain available, however, for those willing to avoid the above mentioned disturbances or hike into the parts of the WSA that are inaccessible to ORVs.

The geology of the area would not be impacted. Impacts on the other special features - the Baker cypress stand and archaeological sites - would be as described below for those issues.

Impacts on the Baker Cypress Stand

None of the management actions under the Proposed Action would adversely impact the Baker cypress stand because activities involving direct disturbance (fuelwood harvesting, flat lava rock removal, etc.) would not be allowed within the natural area. A possible exception is ORV use which would be allowed in that area, but damage would be negligible, involving only a few (less than 100 per year) individual trees. The fire management actions would benefit the cypress stand by providing a relatively high level of fire protection, more than counterbalancing the impact from ORVs.

As is the case for all resources within the WSA, the cypress stand faces some unquantified risk from possible future development under the No Wilderness proposal. While that risk is acknowledged, this analysis is necessarily limited to the affects of the management actions which are explained at the beginning of Chapter 2.

Conclusion:

Less than 100 individual trees would be damaged or destroyed by ORVs annually. This would be more than counterbalanced by a relatively high level of fire protection.

Impacts on Timber Harvesting

Timber harvesting, which has been discontinued under interim management would be resumed under the Proposed Action (Management Action 1, page 2-1). It would amount to one timber sale of about 200 Mbf every 10 years. The current on-the-stump value (to BLM) of such a sale is about $14,000. It would not be significant in terms of the local economy.

Fuelwood harvesting would also be resumed under the Proposed Action (Management Action 2, page 2-1). By the year 2000 about 100 cords per year would be harvested within the WSA, the permit fee being $5 per cord.

None of the other management actions would impact timber harvesting. Management Action 4 (page 2-3) which opens the area to ORV use would facilitate fuelwood harvesting, about 75 percent of which would not take place if there were ORV restrictions.

Conclusion:

There would be one timber sale of about 200 Mbf every 10 years and, by the year 2000, a fuelwood harvest of about 100 cords per year. Although this could be significant to individual local residents, it would not be significant in terms of the local economy.

Impacts on Recreational Use Levels

Possible increases in wildlife production (including quail) from the guzzlers (Management Action 3, page 2-3) and slightly improved access from flat lava rock removal activities (Management Action 5, page 2-3) would result in a minor increase in recreational use of the WSA to about 2,300 visitor days per year. Most of the increase would be due to increased numbers of quail hunters.

Conclusion:

There would be a minor increase in recreational use to about 2,300 visitor days per year.

Impacts on Important Archaeological Sites

Moderate impacts to at least one important archaeological site is anticipated under the Proposed Action in the next 15 years. Impacts from permitted activities (timber sales, fuelwood gathering, and flat lava rock removal) would be minimized by compliance with Section 106 of the National

Historic Preservation Act, however, such activities, particularly the removal of flat lava rock, pose a threat to unknown sites and enforcement of and compliance with permit provisions is not always perfect.

There is also the potential for impacts to archaeological sites from ORVs. However, the natural inaccessibility of the majority (80 percent) of the WSA will protect most sites, both known and unknown.

Conclusion:

There would be moderate damage to at least one important archaeological site (known or unknown) in the next 15 years, the largest threats being flat lava rock removal and ORV use.

Impacts on the Volume of Flat Lava Rock Removed

Under the Proposed Action the removal of decorative flat lava rock from the WSA would again be permitted (Management Action 5, page 2-3). It is estimated this would amount to about 400 tons per year for the foreseeable future. Permittees pay BLM $10 per ton. Although individuals would benefit, it would not be significant to the local economy.

Conclusion:

About 400 tons of flat lava rock would be removed each year. This would not be important to the local economy.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

Despite the application of mitigating measures to timber management, flat lava rock removal and other activities, some adverse impacts cannot be avoided. These include a short-term loss of naturalness on about 20 percent of the area and a longer term loss of naturalness on a much smaller part of the WSA. Moderate damage to at least one important archaeological site (known or unknown) in the next 15 years is also probably unavoidable under the Proposed Action.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

The management actions anticipated under the Proposed Action (see pages 2-1 through 2-4) are such that the long-term productivity of the WSA would be retained as would future management options including wilderness designation. This is especially true for the inaccessible portions of the WSA.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

The only irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources would be the flat lava rock that would be removed and the predicted moderate impact on at least one known or unknown archaeological site in the next 15 years.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative the entire Timbered Crater WSA (which includes the Baker Cypress Instant Study Area) would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to wilderness values and archaeological resources.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, all 18,690 acres of the Timbered Crater WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and all of the wilderness values would be protected by legislative mandate. Wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, primitive or unconfined recreation and the area's special features (the geology, the Baker cypress stand, and archaeological sites) would be retained.

- Naturalness

Naturalness within the WSA would be almost entirely retained under the All Wilderness Alternative. The only actions with an adverse impact on naturalness would be the installation of the wildlife guzzlers (Management Action 3, page 2-4), and the signing and trailhead development associated with the ORV closure (Management Action 4, page 2-4).

See page 4-3 for a discussion of the impact of the guzzlers. The total area affected by these would be less than three acres. The signing, trailhead development and blocking of roads would affect naturalness on about 15 acres. The areas affected could be easily and quickly avoided by visitors to the area.

- Solitude

Impacts on opportunities for solitude would closely mirror those described above for naturalness. The impacts would be negligible, affecting far less than one percent of the WSA. Visitors seeking solitude could easily avoid the areas where solitude would be impacted.

- Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

  Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are quite limited in the WSA (see page 3-3). Existing opportunities would be neither reduced nor enhanced under this alternative. Access to the areas that are inaccessible because of terrain would be reduced because of the ORV prohibition, but similar isolation could easily be achieved from the access points that would be provided.

- Special Features

  The special features of the Timbered Crater WSA are its geological (lava flow) characteristics, the Baker cypress stand, and several important archaeological sites.

  The geology of the area would not be impacted under any of the alternatives.

  The Baker cypress stand would have a lower level of fire protection than under the Proposed Action, but there would be no damage to it from ORVs and the acquisition of inholdings would increase slightly (from 15 to 16 percent) the percentage of the stand that could be protected.

  The archaeological sites would be protected under this alternative.

Conclusion:

Wilderness values would be well protected under this alternative. Naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be reduced on less than 20 acres from wildlife guzzlers and development designed to prevent ORV use of the area. The limited existing opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be retained and the special features of the WSA would be either unaffected or enhanced.

Impacts on the Baker Cypress Stand

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, the Baker cypress stand would not be impacted by ORV use (see Management Action 4, page 2-4) but would receive a lesser degree of fire protection (Management Action 5, page 2-5) than it would under the Proposed Action.

The stand could benefit from acquisition of the inholdings (Management ACtion, page 2-5) one of which includes a portion of the stand (Map 2-1). This would allow a greater percentage of the stand (16 instead of 15 percent) to enjoy the protection of wilderness designation.

Conclusion:

There would be no damage from ORVs, but a lower level of fire protection. Acquisition of inholdings would increase the percentage of the stand that could be protected to about 16 percent.

Impacts on Timber Harvesting

There would be no timber or fuelwood harvesting within the WSA. This would amount to a loss of about 200 Mbf of timber every ten years and about 100 cords of fuelwood per year.

Conclusion:

There would be no timber or fuelwood harvesting within the WSA.

Impacts on Recreational Use Levels

Of the current level of visitor use (2,250 visitor days annually) about 50 percent is dependent on ORV access. The prohibition of ORVs under All Wilderness (see Management Action 4, page 2-4) will reduce recreational use levels, but there are other factors that will tend to raise those levels. Wilderness designation itself will attract visitors to the area and the wildlife guzzlers (Management Action 3, page 2-4) will increase quail populations which, in turn, are likely to increase the number of hunters that visit the area. Overall, under this alternative it is predicted that recreational use levels will drop about 25 percent to roughly 1,600 visitor days per year.

Conclusion:

Reduced recreational use due to the prohibition of ORVs would be partially offset by the attraction of a designated wilderness and increased game bird populations. The net result would be a 25 percent decline in recreational use to about 1,600 visitor days per year.

Impacts on Important Archaeological Sites

The fact that timber sales, fuelwood gathering, flat lava rock removal, and ORV use would not be allowed under this alternative would mean that there would be no damage to important archaeological sites.

Conclusion:

The archaeological sites would be protected.

Impacts on the Volume of Flat Lava Rock Removed

There would be no removal of flat lava rock from within the WSA. This would amount to a loss of about 400 tons per year for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion:

There would be no removal of flat lava rock from within the WSA.

PARTIAL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative, 14,920 acres of public land within the Timbered Crater WSA would be recommended for wilderness designation. The remaining 3,770 acres (which include the Baker Cypress Instant Study Area) would be managed under multiple use.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to wilderness values and archaeological resources.

Wilderness Values

Wilderness values on 14,920 acres of the WSA would be protected by legislative mandate while 3,770 acres would not receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. Wilderness values would, for the most part, be retained because of the natural ruggedness of the area (which limits access) and required mitigations for timber harvests and other permitted activities.

- Naturalness

  Naturalness would be well protected on most of the WSA (the portion recommended suitable plus the 60 percent of the unsuitable portion that is inaccessible to ORVs). Impacts on naturalness from timber and fuelwood harvesting would be the same as described under the Proposed Action on page 4-2, except that the acreage affected by timber harvesting would be reduced by one-fourth. Impacts from the wildlife guzzlers would also be the same as described for the Proposed Action on page 4-3, as would the impacts from ORV use and fire fighting efforts, except that the latter two would be confined to the accessible portion (about 40 percent) the area recommended nonsuitable.

- Solitude

  Impacts on opportunities for solitude would closely mirror those described above for naturalness. When naturalness is disrupted, it is difficult or impossible to have a feeling of solitude. However, since almost all of the disturbing activities are confined to the 40 percent of the suitable portion of the WSA that is not inaccessible, outstanding opportunities for solitude are readily available.

- Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

  Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are quite limited in the WSA (see page 3-3). Those opportunities that do exist would be slightly diminished by the activities described under "Naturalness," above, but those who want a primitive camping experience, for example, could easily find it by hiking into the suitable portion of the WSA or into the 60 percent of the nonsuitable portion that is inaccessible to ORVs.

- Special Features

  Impacts on the special features of the Timbered Crate WSA would be the same as described for the Proposed Action on page 4-3, except that impacts to important archaeological sites would be considerably less because under this alternative there would be no flat lava rock removal. It is predicted there would be negligible damage to one important unknown archaeological site in the next 15 years. Known sites would not be affected.

Conclusion:

Under this alternative wilderness values would be well protected on about 85 percent of the WSA. On the remaining 15 percent (the accessible portion of the area recommended nonsuitable) impacts on naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be similar to those described for the Proposed Action except that none of the impacts would last more than about five years because there would be no removal of flat lava rock.

The limited opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be diminished slightly by the activities affecting naturalness (timber harvest, fuelwood harvest, guzzler installation, etc.), but those who want primitive camping experience, for example, could easily find it by avoiding disturbed areas.

The geology of the area would not be impacted. Impacts on the other special features - Baker cypress stand and archaeological sites - would be as described below for those issues.

Impacts on the Baker Cypress Stand

Under the Partial Wilderness Alternative, impacts on the Baker cypress stand would be the same as described for the Proposed Action on page 4-4.

Conclusion:

Impacts would be the same as under the Proposed Action.

Impacts on Timber Harvesting

Impacts on timber harvesting would be the same as described for the Proposed Action on page 4-5, except that one-fourth of the CFL (100 acres) would not be available for harvest (because it is in the area that would be recommended suitable) reducing the volume and value of each sale to 150 Mbf and $11,500, respectively.

Fuelwood harvesting would remain at the same level as described for the Proposed Action, but would be restricted to the area recommended nonsuitable for wilderness.

Conclusion:

Impacts would be the same as under the Proposed Action, except that the harvest every 10 years would be reduced by 25 percent to 150 Mbf.

Impacts on Recreational Use Levels

Impacts on recreational use levels would be the same as under the All Wilderness Alternative (see page 4-9) except that only about two-thirds of the ORV use would be eliminated (because about two-thirds of the WSA would be closed to ORV use). The result would be a drop in overall recreational use levels of about 10 percent to approximately 2,000 visitor days annually.

Conclusion:

Impacts would be the same as under the All Wilderness Alternative, except that because of only partial elimination of ORV use, recreational use would only decline 10 percent to about 2,000 visitor days per year.

Impacts on Important Archaeological Sites

The impacts to known archaeological sites, all of which are in the area recommended suitable, would be the same as under the All Wilderness Alternative (no impact). Timber sales, fuelwood harvesting, and ORV use could damage unknown sites in the nonsuitable area, but the risk to such sites would not be great since the activity that poses the greatest hazard to archaeological sites - removal of flat lava rock - does not occur in that area. It is anticipated that there would be negligible damage to one important (but currently unknown) archaeological site in the next 15 years.

Conclusion:

There would be negligible damage to one important but currently unknown archaeological site in the next 15 years. Known sites would be protected.

Impacts on the Volume of Flat Lava Rock Removed

Because all of the areas with commercial amounts of flat lava rock are within the area recommended suitable under this alternative, there would be no removal of this rock from within the WSA. This would amount to a loss of about 400 tons per year for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion:

There would be no removal of flat lava rock from within the WSA.

LAVA WSA
(CA-030-203)

PROPOSED ACTION (NO WILDERNESS/NO ACTION)

Under the proposal none of the 11,632 acres in the Lava WSA would be designated wilderness.

The primary impacts under this proposal relate to wilderness values and the nesting success of bald eagles.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

None of the WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation and none of the wilderness values on 11,632 would receive the special legislative protection provided by wilderness designation. Wilderness values would, for the most part, be retained because of the natural ruggedness of the area, which limits access, and required mitigations for timber harvest and other permitted activities.

- Naturalness

  Most of the management actions listed on pages 2-9 and 2-10 would have an adverse impact on naturalness in localized portions of the WSA. However, because of the ruggedness and natural inaccessibility of much of the area (ORVs can only operate on about 10 percent of the WSA) overall impacts on naturalness would generally be minor.

  An exception to the above is the anticipated powerline (Management Action 7, page 2-10). Depending on its location (which would have to be carefully planned) the powerline could be visible (and, thus, disrupt naturalness) over a large area, perhaps as much as 20 percent of the WSA.

  Naturalness would be impaired every 20 years during the actual harvesting of timber. The noise and activity related to timber cutting would destroy naturalness for those using the area for other purposes. Although only about 50 acres would be harvested at a time, the noise and visual aspects of the disturbance would spread out to a much larger area, probably about 250 acres depending among other things on the length and location of the access roads.

  On the 50 acres actually harvested, there would be a more permanent impact on naturalness. This impact, however, would not be severe since clearcuts are not planned and substantial number of trees would be left after each harvest. Also, as revegetation occurred the naturalness of the areas harvested would gradually improve, probably being completely restored after five to ten years.

Fuelwood harvests would have an impact on naturalness similar to that of timber harvests and would impact temporarily (during harvest) about 75 acres per year and more permanently about 15 acres (the area actually harvested).

ORV use would periodically destroy naturalness on 10 percent of the area, but only a very small part of the area (less than one percent) would be affected at any one time and the impact would be mostly temporary - it (the impact) would leave when the ORVs did except for minor damage that would be done to vegetation and, perhaps, other resources.

Removal of flat lava rock would permanently destroy naturalness on about 10 acres per year and would temporarily (during the actual removal process) disturb about 50 acres.

Fire fighting efforts (Management Action 9, page 2-10) also have the potential to destroy naturalness in those limited areas where it is physically possible to use heavy equipment. Because the occurrence, location, and size of future fires are not known, no estimate of the acreage that would be disturbed by fire fighting efforts has been made.

- Solitude

Impacts on opportunities for solitude would closely mirror those described above for naturalness. When naturalness is disrupted it is difficult or impossible to have a feeling of solitude. However, since most of the disturbing activities are confined to the 10 percent of the WSA that is accessible, outstanding opportunities for solitude remain in the more rugged portions of the WSA and are easily available to those who seek them.

- Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation consist of relatively good deer and upland game hunting and some opportunities for hiking and camping. These opportunities would be enhanced to a minor degree by the vegetation changes that would lead to increased deer populations (see the analysis of impacts on deer, below).

The powerline (Management Action 7, page 2-10) would interfere with this type of recreation because of its visual intrusion on as much as 20 percent of the area.

Other activities such as timber and fuelwood harvesting and flat lava rock removal could interfere with primitive and unconfined recreation, but such activities would be limited to a relatively small area (about 350 acres for temporary - "during harvest" - impacts, about 75 acres for more permanent impacts) and could easily be avoided by recreationists.

- Special Features

The special features of the Lava WSA are its geological (lava flow) characteristics and the bald eagle nesting site.

The geology of the area would not be impacted by any of the alternatives.

It is predicted that the eagle nesting site will regain its productivity within three years. Management actions such as timber and fuelwood harvesting, prescribed burning, flat lava rock removal, limited ORV use, and powerline construction would have only negligible impacts on the eagles.

Conclusion:

The 10 percent of the area that is accessible to ORV would experience temporary disruptions of naturalness over much of its geographic extent from ORV use and such activities as timber harvesting, fuelwood harvesting, and the removal of flat lava rock. Within this area the disruption of naturalness would be relatively permanent on 10 acres per year from the removal of flat lava rock and would last about five years on an average of 20 acres per year from fuelwood and timber harvesting.

Impacts on opportunities for solitude would be similar to those described for naturalness. Both naturalness and solitude would be preserved quite well on the 90 percent of the area that is inaccessible.

Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation in the WSA would remain available for those willing to avoid the above mentioned disturbances or hike into the parts of the WSA that are inaccessible to ORVs.

The geology of the area would not be impacted. Impacts on the other special feature - the bald eagle nest site-would be as described below for that issue.

Impacts on the Nesting Success of Bald Eagles

It is anticipated that the protective measures designed to benefit the eagles (Management Action 4, page 2-9) will enable the productivity of this site to resume. (A pair of eagles successfully nested there for the last eight years through 1984. However, the last two years - 1985 and 1986 - although eagles were present in the area, no eaglets were produced. The reason for the nesting failures in 1985 and 1986 is not known, but it is believed that the measures in Management Action 4 will help.) In addition the prescribed burn (Management Action 1, page 2-9) would benefit the eagles slightly by creating vegetation conditions that would increase the prey base (small mammals) of the eagles. However, the eagles forage primarily along the Pit River and primarily for water-related prey species, so the benefit of the burn would be negligible (see page 3-10).

Other projected activities within the WSA - timber and fuelwood harvesting, ORV use (which will be kept away from the nesting sites), and the removal of flat lava rock - are not expected to have any adverse affect on the eagles. Eagles are generally tolerant of such activities as long as the activities are a reasonable distance (a half mile or so) from their critical use areas such as nesting sites.

Hunting in the area (see Management Action 5, page 2-9) does not pose a threat to the eagles because the legal hunting seasons and the nesting season do not overlap.

The anticipated powerline (Management Action 7, page 2-10) can be assumed to not impact the eagles because the studies and analysis (including Section 7 consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service) that would be conducted prior to its construction would result in it being located where it would have no measurable impact on the eagles (see the Appendix).

Conclusion:

It is predicted that the eagle nesting site will regain its productivity within three years. Management actions such as timber and fuelwood harvesting, prescribed burning, flat lava rock removal, limited ORV use, and powerline construction would have only negligible impacts on the eagles.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population Levels

Deer populations would benefit from the prescribed burn and the timber and fuelwood harvests (Management Actions 1 to 3, page 2-9) because these actions create new (early) successional stages of vegetation that include important deer forage species. However, since only a small percentage of the Lassen deer herd uses the WSA (see page 3-9) the effect these actions would have on deer populations within the WSA is difficult to predict. Nevertheless, it is estimated that the use of the critical habitat in winter will increase by 20 deer (to 320 to 620 deer) over the next 10 years and that fall population levels for the WSA will also increase by 20 deer (to 220 to 520 deer) over the same period.

Conclusion:

Winter and fall deer populations within the WSA would increase by from two to five percent (to a maximum of 620 and 520 deer, respectively) over the next 10 years because of planned vegetation manipulations.

Impacts on Recreational Use Levels

Recreational use levels are expected to remain at about 8,700 visitor days per year. Management actions benefiting the bald eagles and the deer population levels (see the analyses above) could attract additional recreationists to the WSA. However, such increases are not expected to be measurable and would be at least partially offset by the negative visual aspects of the anticipated powerline and the renewal of flat lava rock removal (Management Actions 7 and 8, page 2-10).

Conclusion:

Recreational use levels would remain at about 8,700 visitor days per year.

Impacts on Timber Harvesting

Timber harvesting, which has been discontinued under interim management, would be resumed under the Proposed Action (Management Action 2, page 2-9). It would amount to one timber sale of about 1.0 MMbf every 20 years. The current on-the-stump value (to BLM) of such a sale is about $70,000. It would not be significant in terms of the local economy.

Fuelwood harvesting would also be resumed under the Proposed Action (Management Action 3, page 2-9). About 75 cords per year would be harvested within the WSA, the permit fee being $5 per cord.

None of the other management actions would impact timber harvesting. Management Action 5 (page 2-9) which opens the areas to ORV use would facilitate fuelwood harvesting, about 75 percent of which would not take place if there were ORV restrictions.

Conclusion:

There would be one timber sale of about 1.0 MMbf every 20 years and a fuelwood harvest of about 75 cords per year. Although this could be significant to individual local residents, it would not be significant in terms of the local economy.

Impacts on the Volume of Flat Lava Rock Removed

Under the Proposed Action the removal of decorative flat lava rock from the WSA would again be permitted (Management Action 8, page 2-10). It is estimated this would amount to about 75 tons per year for the foreseeable future. Permittees pay BLM $10 per ton. Although individuals would benefit, this would not be significant to the local economy.

Conclusion:

About 75 tons of flat lava rock would be removed each year. This would not be important to the local economy.

Adverse Impacts Which Cannot be Avoided

Despite the application of mitigating measures to timber management, flat lava rock removal cannot be avoided. These include a short-term loss of naturalness on about 20% of the area and a longer term of loss of naturalness on a much smaller part of the WSA. This does not include the possible impact of the anticipated powerline which, depending on where it is located, could reduce naturalness permanently on as much as 20 percent of the WSA.

Relationship Between Local Short-Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-Term Productivity

The management actions anticipated under the Proposed Action (see pages 2-10 and 2-11) are such that the long-term productivity of the WSA would be retained as would future management options including wilderness designation. This is especially true for the inaccessible portion of the WSA.

Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

The only irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources would be the flat lava rock that would be removed.

ALL WILDERNESS ALTERNATIVE

Under this alternative all 11,632 acres in the Lava WSA would be recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

The primary impacts under this alternative relate to wilderness values and the nesting success of bald eagles.

Impacts on Wilderness Values

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, all 11,632 acres of the Lava WSA would be recommended suitable for wilderness designation and all of the wilderness values would be protected by legislative mandate. Wilderness values of naturalness, solitude, primitive or unconfined recreation and the area's special features (the geology and the bald eagle nesting site) would be retained.

- Naturalness

Naturalness within the WSA would be almost entirely retained under the All Wilderness Alternative. The only actions with an adverse impact on naturalness would be the signing and trailhead development associated with the ORV closure (Management Action 3, page 2-11). The total area on which naturalness would be affected by the signing, trailhead development and blocking of roads would be about 10 acres. The area affected could be easily and quickly avoided by visitors to the area.

- Solitude

Impacts on opportunities for solitude would closely mirror those described above for naturalness. When naturalness is disrupted, it is difficult or impossible to have a feeling of solitude. The impacts on solitude would be negligible, affecting far less than one percent of the WSA. Visitors seeking solitude could easily avoid the areas where solitude would be impacted.

- Special Features

  The special features of the Lava WSA are its geological (lava flow) characteristics and the bald eagle nesting site.

  The geology of the area would not be impacted by any of the alternatives.

  It is predicted that the eagle nesting site will regain its productivity within three years.

- Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

  Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation consists of relatively good deer and upland game hunting and some opportunities for hiking and camping. Existing opportunities would be neither reduced nor enhanced under this alternative. Access to the areas that are inaccessible because of terrain would be reduced because of the ORV prohibition, but similar isolation could easily be achieved from the access points that would be provided.

Conclusion:

Wilderness values would be well protected under this alternative. Naturalness and opportunities for solitude would be reduced on less than 15 acres from developments designed to prevent ORV use of the area. The limited existing opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation would be retained and the special features of the WSA would be either unaffected or enhanced.

Impacts on the Nesting Success of Bald Eagles

It is anticipated that the protective measure designed to benefit the eagles (Management Action 2, page 2-10) will enable the productivity of this site to resume. (A pair of eagles successfully nested there for at least eight years through 1984. However, the last two years - 1985 and 1986 - although eagles were present in the area, no eaglets were produced. The reason for the nesting failures in 1985 and 1986 is not known, but it is believed that the measures in Management Action 2 will help.)

Under the All Wilderness Alternative, there would be an even better chance of regaining the productivity of the nesting site than under the Proposed Action because a number of activities that could have a minor adverse impact on the eagles (the powerline, ORV use, timber and fuelwood harvesting, and flat lava rock removal) would not take place. A slight detriment to the eagles might be the lack of prescribed burning under this alternative. See the discussion of impacts on the eagles under the Proposed Action, page 4-15.

Conclusion:

It is predicted that the eagle nesting site would regain its productivity within three years.

Impacts on Mule Deer Population Levels

Since there would be no direct vegetation manipulations under this alternative, no changes in deer population levels are anticipated.

Conclusion:

Fall deer population levels within the WSA would remain at 200 to 500 animals; the winter population would remain at 300 to 600.

Impacts on Recreational Use Levels

The elimination of ORVs from the WSA (Management Action 3, page 2-11) would by itself eliminate about 1,700 of the estimated 8,700 visitor days the WSA receives. However, this loss would be partially offset by visitors that would be attracted because of possible benefits to the eagles and the mere fact that the area was designated wilderness. The net result would be about 7,500 visitor days per year.

Conclusion:

Recreational use levels would decrease to about 7,500 visitor days per year because of the ORV prohibition which would be only partially offset by the increased attraction of wilderness designation and the eagles.

Impacts on Timber Harvesting

There would be no timber or fuelwood harvesting within the WSA. This would amount to a loss of about 1.0 MMbf of timber every 20 years and about 75 cords of fuelwood per year.

Conclusion:

There would be no timber or fuelwood harvesting within the WSA.

Impacts on the Volume of Flat Lava Rock Removed

There would be no removal of flat lava rock from within the WSA. This would amount to a loss of about 75 tons per year for the foreseeable future.

Conclusion:

There would be no removal of flat lava rock from within the WSA.

Chapter 5

Consultation & Coordination

CHAPTER 5

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Public involvement has been a planned and integral part of the wilderness study process for the Timbered Crater and Lava WSAs.

The Notice of Intent to conduct the wilderness study was published in the Federal Register on December 17, 1980. The public was also notified through media releases in local and regional newspapers and through letters to individuals and organizations on the District's mailing list.

Following this announcement, over 700 planning newsletters and 300 copies of the Planning Criteria Document were sent to the public at large requesting comments, concerns, and identification of known management problems and opportunities. In addition to public involvement during the planning process, a scoping announcement was published in the Federal Register on September 30, 1981.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement was filed with the Environmental Protection Agency in May 1983, and mailed to the organizations and individuals listed on page 5-2. A Notice of Availability appeared in the Federal Register, Vol. 48, No. 108 on June 3, 1983, establishing a 90-day public review period.

During the public comment period (June 3 to September 6, 1983) one formal hearing was conducted to solicit public advice and comments regarding the proposed action and alternatives.

Thirty-one written comments were received and four individuals testified at the public hearing. The Atlantic Richfield Company, Fall River Big Valley Cattlemen's Association, California Mining Association, The Minerals Exploration Coalition, and Pacific Gas and Electric Company were organizations providing written comments supporting a non-wilderness designation. The Sierra Club, California Wilderness Coalition, the Wilderness Society, and the Northeast Californians for Wilderness presented oral testimony, all of which favored a wilderness designation.

CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER PLANS

The recommendations in this report are consistent with existing local, State, and Federal Plans.

LASSEN NATIONAL FOREST

Lassen National Forest is currently developing new forest land and resource management plans, which will determine management direction for the Forest

Service administered lands adjacent to the Timbered Crater WSA. Three parcels (Map 2-1) that were previously administratively endorsed as wilderness are being reconsidered as part of the new land management plan. Prior to the RARE II process, the lands were designated for multiple-use with emphasis toward maintaining aesthetic values of geologic features and soil and vegetation resources. Some emphasis was placed on special management in the Baker cypress vegetation types. These parcels will not become wilderness if Timbered Crater is found unsuitable, as they cannot stand alone. The resources and values of these parcels are similar to Timbered Crater WSA. Either inclusion or non-inclusion of the Forest Service parcels in the wilderness system would not significantly affect the impact of the Bureau of Land Management's decision.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

The State of California has recently acquired 5,890 acres directly south of the Timbered Crater WSA. The area is classified and managed as a State Park (Ahjumawi-Lava Springs State Park). A general management plan has not been developed.

Lava WSA is part of the Cinder Cone National Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Area (NCLWMA), an area managed in cooperation with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDF&G) for the benefit of the wildlife resources. Both agencies have been involved in habitat improvement projects, especially water developments which have significantly improved the habitat for upland game species. CDF&G has expressed concern over any changes that might affect their investment and management of these areas. Wilderness designation would constrain management options and, thereby, potentially conflict with the purpose of the Management Area. The present designation is, therefore, considered preferable to a wilderness designation relative to wildlife habitat management.

MODOC AND SHASTA COUNTIES

The remaining adjacent lands are in Modoc and Shasta Counties. The adjacent lands in Modoc County are designated by the county land-use plan for "range/livestock" grazing. Shasta County lands are designated for agriculture and open space. Shasta County is presently revising its land-use plans.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE DRAFT EIS

The draft EIS was sent to the following agencies, organizations, and individuals. (An asterisk indicates those who responded.)

FEDERAL AGENCIES

Department of Agriculture
    Soil Conservation Service*
    Forest Service

Department of the Interior
  Bureau of Indian Affairs
  Bureau of Land Management
  Bureau of Mines
  Bureau of Reclamation
  Fish and Wildlife Service
  Geological Survey
  National Park Service

Advisory Council on Historical Preservation
Council on Environmental Quality
Corps of Engineers
Department of Energy
Environmental Protection Agency*
Federal Aviation Administration
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Federal Highway Administration
U.S. Air Force

STATE AGENCIES

Air Resources Board
California Coastal Commission
California State University, Chico
Department of Boating and Waterways
Department of Conservation
Department of Fish and Game*
Department of Food and Agriculture
Department of Forestry
Department of Health Services
Department of Navigation and Ocean Development
Department of Transportation
Department of Water Resources
Division of Aeronautics
Division of Highways
Native American Heritage Commission
University of California - Cooperative Extension - McArthur

FEDERAL AND STATE REPRESENTATIVES

Congressman Gene Chappie
Congressman Norman Shumway
Senator Alan Cranston
Senator Pete Wilson

LOCAL AGENCIES

Board of Supervisors and Dept. of Planning: Lassen, Modoc, Shasta, and Siskiyou Counties
City of Fall River Mills
City of Burney

ORGANIZATIONS

Atlantic Richfield Company*
California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs
California Cattlemen's Association
California Native Plan Society
California Wilderness Coalition, Chico
Cooksley Geophysics, Inc.
Glass Mountain 4-Wheelers
Homestake Mining Co.
Fall River - Big Valley Cattlemen's Association*
National Resources Defense Council
Modoc County Cattlemen's Association
Northern Counties Wildlife Association
Pacific Gas and Electric Company*
Pacific Power and Light Company
Pit River Tribal Office
Roseburg Lumber Company
Sierra Club: Washington, D.C., Sacramento, Shingletown
Shasta Miners and Prospectors
Toyon Wintu Center Inc.
Western Mining Council
Colorado State University
Southern California Edison
TOSCO Corporation
Wilderness Society

INDIVIDUALS

Gene Argo
Andrew Babcock
Charles Babcock
Beaver Creek Ranch
Floyd Bidwell
L.C. Bosworth
H.M. Brasher
Chris Browning
Edward Bruce
Bruce Campbell
George Corder
Marty and Annette Cordano
Ted Crum
Dixie Valley Ranch
Morris Doty
Steve Evans
James Fabian
Rudolph Giessner
Craig Harrington
Richard Hathway
Water Howard
George Ingram
Jack Kelly
J.L. Kerns
Mrs. Zereda Jensen
Walter Lucus
Kenneth McCarther
William Opferman
Milton Perkins
Clifford Oiler
Robert Radle
John Reginato
S-X Cattle Company
Curtis Spalding*
Floyd Summer
W.H. Thompson
Tom Vestal
Nick Zappettini
Tribal Chairman, X-L Ranch
Chuck Rowe
John Swanson*

COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSES

Comment letters on the Draft EIS were received from 20 sources. All of these letters were reviewed to determine if they met the required criteria for response, i.e., discussion of the adequacy of the DEIS. Substantive comments which presented new data, questioned facts, and/or analyses, or commented on issues bearing directly on the DEIS or the environmental impacts of the proposed action were fully evaluated and given responses. Changes or additions to the DEIS have been incorporated into this final statement. Comments that require a response are identified by a number corresponding to the number of the letter and the number of the response. Comment letters are numbered as shown in Table 5-1. The responses start on page 5-23, immediately following the letters.

Table 5-1. Index to Comment Letters

Letter Number		Page
Received During Official Comment Period		
	Federal Agencies	
1.	Environmental Protection Agency	5-7
2.	Soil Conservation Service	5-8
	State Agencies	
3.	The Resources Agency	5-8
	Local Agencies (no response)	
	Organizations	
4.	Atlantic Richfield Company	5-9
5.	California Mining Association	5-9
6.	Fall River - Big Valley Cattlemen's Association	5-10
7.	Minerals Exploration Coalition	5-11
8.	Northeast Califonrians for Wilderness	5-12
9.	Pacific Gas and Electric Company	5-13
10.	Strout Realty, Inc.	5-14
	Individuals	
11.	Kenneth Beatty	5-15
12.	G.T. Clohessy	5-15
13.	Margaret Grazen	5-16
14.	Rick Jones 5-16	
15.	Lynn Klousner	5-17
16.	Robert Klousner	5-17
17.	Santa Fe Ryan	5-18
18.	Curtis Spalding	5-19
19.	John Swanson	5-20
Received After Official Comment Period		
20.	National Park Service	5-21

COMMENT LETTER 1

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
215 Fremont Street
San Francisco, Ca. 94105

Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, CA 96002

AUG 31 1983

Dear Area Manager:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) titled NORTH CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS: TIMBERED CRATER WSA AND LAVA WSA. We have the enclosed comments regarding this DEIS.

We have classified this DEIS as Category LO-2 (lack of objections - insufficient information). The classification and date of EPA's comments will be published in the Federal Register in accordance with our public disclosure responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

We appreciate the opportunity to review this DEIS. Please send two copies of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) to this office at the same time it is officially filed with our Washington, D.C. office. If you have any questions, please contact Loretta Kahn Barsamian, Chief, EIS Review Section, at (415) 974-8188 or FTS 454-8188.

Sincerely yours,

Charles W. Murray, ~~Jr.~~
Assistant Regional Administrator
for Policy, Technical, and
Resources Management

Enclosure (1)

Water Quality Comments

1-1 We request that the FEIS identify surface and ground water resources (quality and quantity) in the WSAs, under Affected Environment. While we recognize that the DEIS predicts minimal increase in consumptive uses, if there is potential for impacts to water resources under nonwilderness alternatives (due to increased mining, energy, grazing or ORV activities), these should be acknowledged. Such impacts should be addressed as indirect effects related to changes in the pattern of land use (40 CFR 1502.16), and not deferred to future project specific environmental assessments. Our scoping letter of 10/14/82 requested such information.

COMMENT LETTER 2

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Soil
Conservation
Service

2828 Chiles Road
Davis, CA 95616
(916) 449-2888

August 8, 1983

Van W. Manning
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, CA 96002

Dear Mr. Manning:

We acknowledge receipt of the draft environmental impact statement for the Timbered Crater Wilderness Study Area (WSA) and the Lava WSA in the Alturas Resource Area of the Susanville District, California.

2-1 We have reviewed the document and have the following comments: We encourage the use of soils information in both the planning and application processes of the project. Simply declaring land areas as wilderness does not necessarily provide for adequate land treatment. Critically eroding areas such as cut and fill slops and culvert outlets should be identified and properly treated as a part of any selected alternative.

We appreciate the opportunity to review and comment on this project.

Sincerely,

EUGENE E. ANDREUCCETTI
State Conservationist

The Soil Conservation Service
is an agency of the
Department of Agriculture

COMMENT LETTER 3

Resources Building
1416 Ninth Street
95814

(916) 445-5656

Department of Conservation
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Forestry
Department of Boating and Waterways
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Water Resources

GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN
GOVERNOR OF
CALIFORNIA

THE RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA
SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA

Air Resources Board
California Coastal Commission
California Conservation Corps
Colorado River Board
Energy Resources Conservation
and Development Commission
Regional Water Quality
Control Boards
San Francisco Bay Conservation
and Development Commission
Solid Waste Management Board
State Coastal Conservancy
State Lands Commission
State Reclamation Board
State Water Resources Control
Board

Mr. Van W. Manning
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, CA 96002

August 19, 1983

Dear Mr. Manning:

The State has reviewed the draft EIS, North Central California Wilderness Study Areas, submitted through the Office of Planning and Research in accordance with OMB Circular A-95 and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. Review was coordinated with the Energy and Public Utilities Commissions, Water Resources Control Board, and Departments of Conservation, Fish and Game, Parks and Recreation, and Water Resources.

3-1 The Department of Parks and Recreation requests that the 480 acres in Section 18 and 19, T. 38N., R. 5E., which are surrounded by Ahjumawi Lava Springs State Park, not be classified wilderness. Such classification would prevent the proposed transfer of this land to the Department as an addition to the above-mentioned park.

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) could support the two preferred alternatives, with the following minor modifications:

3-2 1. Endangered and sensitive wildlife species (i.e., bald eagles and osprey) should be protected from off-road vehicle use. Section 5 of the Lava Wilderness Study Area should be changed to the SPNM designation, as should the lands adjacent to State Park lands in Sections 18, 19 T38N, R5E, and Section 14, T38N, R4E.

3-3 2. The lands proposed for disposal in Section 27 and 34, T39N, R5E occur within the critical deer winter range of the Day Bench deer herd. These lands should be retained in BLM ownership to maintain the deer herd, since private lands are being subjected to intensive development.

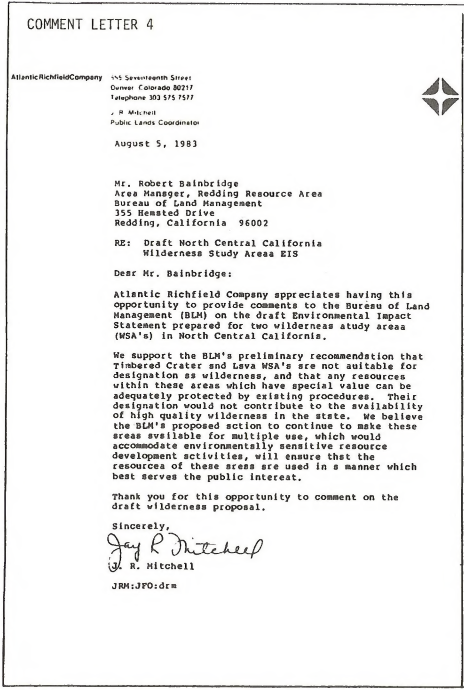
Contact for DFG is A.E. Naylor, Regional Manager, 601 Locust Street, Redding 96001.

Sincerely,

for GORDON F. SNOW, Ph.D.
Assistant Secretary for Resources

(SCH 83060603)

COMMENT LETTER 4



AtlanticRichfieldCompany 555 Seventeenth Street
Denver Colorado 80217
Telephone 303 575 7577

J. R. Mitchell
Public Lands Coordinator

August 5, 1983

Mr. Robert Bainbridge
Area Manager, Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, California 96002

RE: Draft North Central California
Wilderness Study Areas EIS

Dear Mr. Bainbridge:

Atlantic Richfield Company appreciates having this opportunity to provide comments to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) on the draft Environmental Impact Statement prepared for two wilderness study areas (WSA's) in North Central California.

We support the BLM's preliminary recommendation that Timbered Crater and Lava WSA's are not suitable for designation as wilderness, and that any resources within these areas which have special value can be adequately protected by existing procedures. Their designation would not contribute to the availability of high quality wilderness in the state. We believe the BLM's proposed action to continue to make these areas available for multiple use, which would accommodate environmentally sensitive resource development activities, will ensure that the resources of these areas are used in a manner which best serves the public interest.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the draft wilderness proposal.

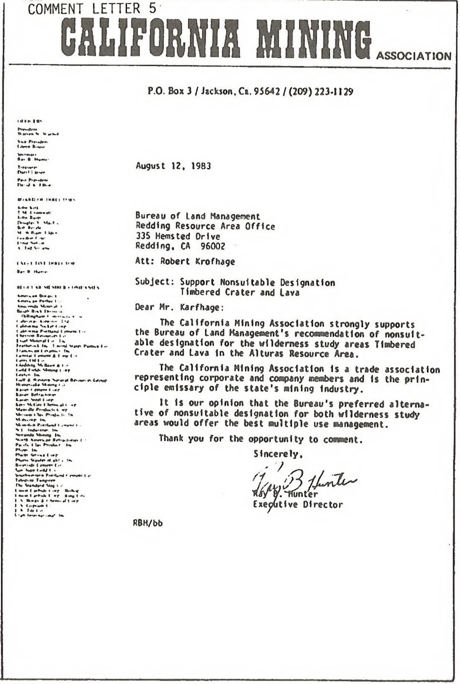
Sincerely,

Jay R. Mitchell

J. R. Mitchell

JRM:JFO:drm

COMMENT LETTER 5



CALIFORNIA MINING ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 3 / Jackson, Ca. 95642 / (209) 223-1129

August 12, 1983

Bureau of Land Management
Redding Resource Area Office
335 Hemsted Drive
Redding, CA 96002

Att: Robert Krofhage

Subject: Support Nonsuitable Designation
Timbered Crater and Lava

Dear Mr. Karfhage:

The California Mining Association strongly supports the Bureau of Land Management's recommendation of nonsuitable designation for the wilderness study areas Timbered Crater and Lava in the Alturas Resource Area.

The California Mining Association is a trade association representing corporate and company members and is the principle emissary of the state's mining industry.

It is our opinion that the Bureau's preferred alternative of nonsuitable designation for both wilderness study areas would offer the best multiple use management.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Ray B. Hunter

Ray B. Hunter
Executive Director

RBH/bb

COMMENT LETTER 6

FALL RIVER - BIG VALLEY CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION
P. O. Box 66
McArthur, Calif. 96056

August 11, 1983

District Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, California 96002

Dear Sir:

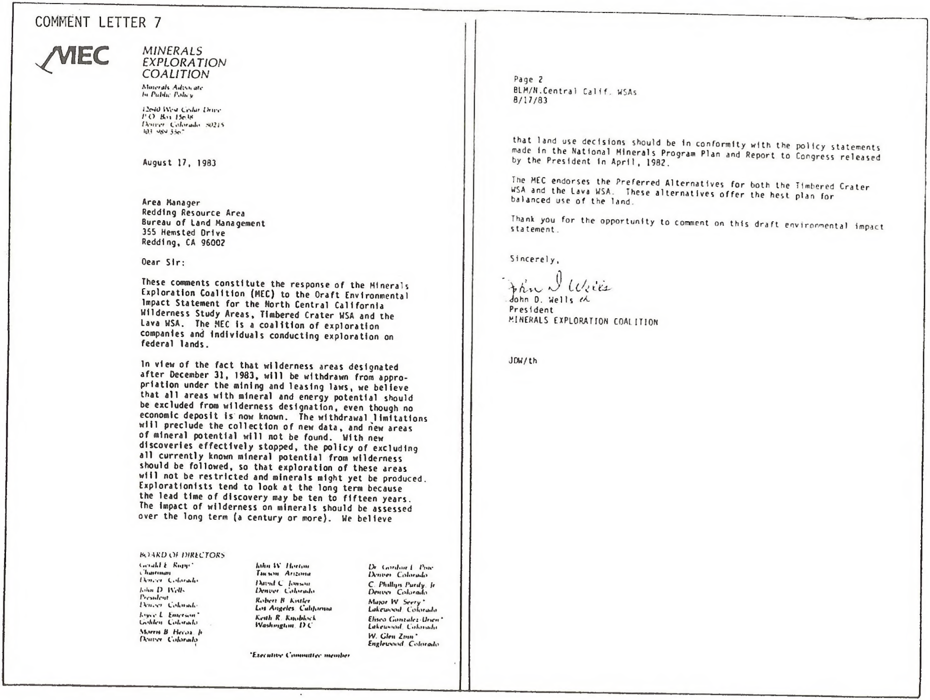
The Directors of our Association have reviewed your document "North Central California Wilderness Study Areas" and believe that you should take no action in either Timbered Crater WSA or Lava WSA. We see no public benefit resulting from wilderness designation.

6-1 There isn't anything special in those areas that can't be found in many other areas in this region. Further, we see a loss in benefit with the loss of mineral and grazing resources. We think wilderness areas should be unique and special and that these two aren't either.

Sincerely,

Ted Crum
President

COMMENT LETTER 7



MEC
MINERALS
EXPLORATION
COALITION

Minerals Advocate
In Public Policy

12640 West Cedar Drive
P.O. Box 15638
Denver, Colorado 80215
303 989 3567

August 17, 1983

Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, CA 96002

Dear Sir:

These comments constitute the response of the Minerals Exploration Coalition (MEC) to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the North Central California Wilderness Study Areas, Timbered Crater WSA and the Lava WSA. The MEC is a coalition of exploration companies and individuals conducting exploration on federal lands.

In view of the fact that wilderness areas designated after December 31, 1983, will be withdrawn from appropriation under the mining and leasing laws, we believe that all areas with mineral and energy potential should be excluded from wilderness designation, even though no economic deposit is now known. The withdrawal limitations will preclude the collection of new data, and new areas of mineral potential will not be found. With new discoveries effectively stopped, the policy of excluding all currently known mineral potential from wilderness should be followed, so that exploration of these areas will not be restricted and minerals might yet be produced. Explorationists tend to look at the long term because the lead time of discovery may be ten to fifteen years. The impact of wilderness on minerals should be assessed over the long term (a century or more). We believe that land use decisions should be in conformity with the policy statements made in the National Minerals Program Plan and Report to Congress released by the President in April, 1982.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Gerald E. Rupp*
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Lakewood, Colorado
Eliseo Gonzalez-Urien*
Lakewood, Colorado
W. Glen Zinn*
Englewood, Colorado
*Executive Committee member

The MEC endorses the Preferred Alternatives for both the Timbered Crater WSA and the Lava WSA. These alternatives offer the best plan for balanced use of the land.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this draft environmental impact statement.

Sincerely,

John D. Wells

John D. Wells
President
MINERALS EXPLORATION COALITION

JDW/th

COMMENT LETTER 8

NORTHEAST CALIFORNIANS FOR WILDERNESS
P.O. Box 391
Susanville, CA 96130

Sept. 1, 1983

Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
BLM
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding CA 96002

Re: North Central California Wilderness Study Areas

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the preliminary wilderness recommendations. We are very interested in the protection of the vanishing wilderness in northeast California.

In summary, the document reports a lack of significant environmental impacts either from wilderness or non-wilderness status. Yet the proposed decision is to recommend all of both wilderness study areas (WSA's) for non-wilderness.

8-1 Once again BLM had the opportunity to add a small amount of acreage to the National Wilderness Preservation system. The 30,322 acres in the two WSA's are among the last roadless areas left on the Alturas Resource Area, amounting to under 8% of its total acreage. They both meet the criteria for wilderness outlined in the 1964 Wilderness Act. Environmental and social impacts would be negligible. In other words, BLM could have just as easily recommended both areas for wilderness; or even one of the two areas for wilderness; or even part of one area for wilderness. And the impacts would have been about the same. But, unfortunately, BLM once again chose to recommend the smallest possible area for wilderness: zero acres. Why?

Furthermore, the EIS gives no plausible reasoning for recommending the entire acreage for non-wilderness instead of wilderness. The rationale offered is that there are other existing and proposed wilderness in the northern California area and that the wilderness quality of these two WSA's is not high enough. See p. 2-11.

This rationale has no logic. It can also be argued, more accurately, that the *non*-wilderness quality of these areas is not high, and there are are many *non*-wilderness areas in northern California with higher quality *non*-wilderness resources; therefore, they should not be recommended for non-wilderness. Also, at the rate the above mentioned "proposed wilderness" is being reconsidered by the Forest Service for non-wilderness development, these two WSA's may be among the only wilderness candidates left in the area.

BLM in this EIS seems to believe that wilderness status is an obstacle to multiple use management rather than an integral part of it. The "loaded" names given to each alternative reveal this misperception: "All Wilderness"; "Partial Wilderness"; and on the other hand, "Multiple-Use/No Action"; "Multiple-Use/Full Development"; "Multiple-Use/Limited Development/No Action". The message is that wilderness is not multiple use. But refer to BLM's own definition of multiple use on p. G-1, which includes "the use of some lands for less than all of the resources." Clearly, wilderness *is* part of multiple use.

8-2 The EIS focuses on the supposed disadvantages, and slights the advantages of wilderness protection. The EIS should give fair, equal treatment to the benefits, which are numerous. They include: primitive recreation, solitude, wildlife habitat protection, threatened and endangered plant protection, archaeological resource protection, and not least, protection from privatization by the asset management program of Interior Secretary Watt. There are also intangible values that only wilderness offers——vicarious enjoyment, preservation of a piece of our Nation's primitive heritage, and spiritual benefits from knowing it is there, even if we never even visit it.

8-3 At a very minimum the EIS should propose "All Wilderness" for the Timbered Crater WSA. This would be consistent with the adjacent Forest Service recommendation, and with proposed wilderness legislation in Congress, as well as with past BLM discussions and positions on the issue. There seems to be no good excuse for contradicting these precedents. Consistency should be maintained.

We propose Alternative 1, All Wilderness for the Timbered Crater WSA; and Alternative 1, All Wilderness, for the Lava WSA. These areas are both essentially in wilderness condition now; and what could better epitomize the biblical and classical idea of wilderness than these harsh, dry, sparsely vegetated wildlands? But there is no assurance they will remain that way except under wilderness protection.

You have wilderness resources in these areas that are greater than you realize or acknowledge. Wilderness designation will not have significant environmental impacts, but it will add needed acreage to our Nation's wilderness heritage. With so few costs and such enduring benefits, wilderness status makes very good sense.

Sincerely,
Carl Schwarzenberg
Carl Schwarzenberg
Northeast Californians for Wilderness

COMMENT LETTER 9

PACIFIC GAS AND ELECTRIC COMPANY

77 BEALE STREET • SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94106 • [illegible]

J. W. PAGE
MANAGER
LAND DEPARTMENT

August 30, 1983

Bureau of Land Management
Draft EIS: Timbered Crater
And Lava Wilderness Study Areas
File: 025.35

Robert J. Bainbridge
Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, California 96002

Dear Mr. Bainbridge:

Pacific Gas and Electric Company is an investor-owned utility serving over nine million gas, electric, and water customers in Northern California. We appreciate this opportunity to comment on the June 1983 draft Environmental Impact Statement providing preliminary wilderness recommendations for the Timbered Crater Wilderness Study Area (WSA) and the Lava WSA.

PGandE has no existing or planned facilities in either the Timbered Crater WSA or the Lava WSA. We have no problems with the BLM's preliminary recommendations for these 2 areas.

The Company does have future plans in the Alturas Resource Area that include interstate transmission corridors. As we have done in the past, we will contact the BLM to solicit comments regarding these corridors.

If you have any questions, please call Diane McQuarie at (415) 541-5774.

Sincerely,

JWPage

MRKercheval/sa

COMMENT LETTER 10

LICENSED REAL ESTATE BROKER

STROUT® REALTY, Inc.

416 E. CYPRESS AVENUE
P.O. BOX 3185
REDDING, CA 96002
PHONE (916) 243 6072, RES 221 1844
LOC: 2 blks. W of Interstate 5

JERRY E TUCKER
Branch Manager/Real Estate Broker

24 August 1983

Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, California 96002

Re: Timbered Crater Wilderness Study area
Lava Wilderness Study Area

Dear Sir:

10-1 I understand that in June with the release of the DEIS for these two areas, the Bures of Land Management recommended non-wilderness for both. According to the Mother Lode chapter of the Sierra Club this is a change from your previous indications of wanting to see these areas as wilderness.

10-2 It seems there are no known mineral or usable timer values in the areas. A wilderness designation, according to BLM, wouldn't have any significant effects on cattle grazing. The Club states it better than I, so I quote "The analysis document also admits that the Timbered Crater WSA has significant values in the Baker Cypress groves found there. It also admits that significant archaeological resources are found in the Timbered Crater area and that wilderness would be the best way to protect them along with the wildlife values found there. The Lava WBA has significant winter deer range that would be best protected by wilderness designation. Also found in Lava are unique geologic features including Popcorn Cave and Big Cave, which are visited by spelunkers. All of these amenity values, along with the early season wilderness recreation potential of these areas, far outweigh the minimal, at best, consumptive resources found here, and therefore wilderness should be recommended for both."[1]

From what I have read, I would be firmly in favor of wilderness designation of these areas. I would be interested in knowing if you disagree substantially with any of these statements and/or if you have other reasons for changing to a recommendation of non-wilderness.

Sincerely,

Nadine R. Tucker

NADINE R. TUCKER

---

[1] Sierra Club, Mother Lode Chapter Shasta Group
August 17, 1983

COMMENT LETTER 11

3631 Summit Dr.
Mt Shasta, CA 96067
29 August, 1983

Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemstead Drive
Redding, CA 96002

Dear Sir:

I urge you to reconsider the wilderness values of the Lava Wilderness Study Area and the Timbered Crater Wilderness Study Area and recommend that these areas be given wilderness status. Their wildlife, vegetative characteristics (especially the Baker Cypress) and archaeological values would be best served by wilderness protection.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Kenneth Beatty

COMMENT LETTER 12

G.T. Clohessy
2145 Solar Way
Redding, Ca. 96002
August 19, 1983

Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Dr.
Redding, Ca. 96002

To Whom It May Concern:

12-1 It has recently come to my attention that the BLM has reversed its position on wilderness designation for The Timbered Crater Wilderness Study Area north of Fall River Mills and Lava Wilderness Study Area Southeast of Fall River Mills.

I would like to go on record at this time as being in unalterable support for wilderness designation for both of these areas. I firmly believe that to do otherwise would be extremely short sighted and a waste of those amenities for which they are known.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of my position.

Very truly yours,

G. T. Clohessy

COMMENT LETTER 13

8/20/83

Dear Area Manager,

I have heard that the Timbered Crater Wilderness Study Area and the 'Lava WSA' near Fall River Mills [illegible] been removed as recommended wilderness areas in the new Draft EIS of the BLM. Why should these areas be withdrawn? The state needs wilderness areas as its population grows, and your agency is in a position to supply that need. Wilderness designation is appropriate as indicated by the fact that they have been in Rare II wilderness bills before Congress. Please reconsider this strange designation more. Thank you 13-1

Sincerely

Margaret [illegible]

[illegible] McCloud Ave
Mt. Shasta Ca 96017

COMMENT LETTER 14

[redacted]
P.O. BOX 865 TULELAKE, CALIFORNIA 96134

Gentlemen:

I feel strongly that the following areas should be given Wilderness Designation

Timbered Crater WSA
Lava WSA

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
RECEIVED
AUG 25 1983
REDDING RESOURCE AREA

Thanks
Rick Jones

COMMENT LETTER 15

390 Rio Lindo Avenue, Apt. 70
Chico, CA 95926
August 29, 1983

Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, CA 96002

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to protest your decision to recommend both the Timbered Crater WSA and the Lava WSA for non-wilderness status. I believe that the significant benefits of habitat protection (Baker Cypress, deer winter range) and protection of archaeological sites outweigh the slight mineral and timber resources of the areas. Additionally, both areas would serve to offer significant recreation opportunities--opportunities which might be lost should development of these two areas occur. I urge you to reconsider your position.

Sincerely,

Lynn Klousner

COMMENT LETTER 16

390 Rio Lindo Avenue, Apt. 70
Chico, CA 95926
August 29, 1983

Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding, CA 96002

Dear Sirs:

I am writing to protest your decision to recommend both the Timbered Crater WSA and the Lava WSA for non-wilderness status. I believe that the significant benefits of habitat protection (Baker Cypress, deer winter range) and protection of archaeological sites outweigh the slight mineral and timber resources of the area. Additionally, both areas would serve to offer significant recreation opportunities--opportunities which might be lost should development of these two areas occur. I urge you to reconsider your position.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Klousner

COMMENT LETTER 17

518 South Weed Blvd.
WEED, CALIFORNIA 96094
August 29, 1983

AREA MANAGER
REDDING RESOURCE AREA, BLM

Honorable Sir:

The Wilderness Study Areas that you have under consideration, Timbered Crater-north of Fall River Mills and the Lava-south of Fall River Mills, Both Need to be classified and protected as Wilderness areas.
The B L M studies have already verified this. People and animals, all of life needs the Wilderness. As technology increases so does our need for Wilderness areas. Protect our quality of life, which is Nature.

Sincerely,

Santa Fe Ryan

SANTA FE RYAN

COMMENT LETTER 18

720 Washoe
Susanville CA 96130

August 28, 1983

Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Dr.
Redding CA 96002

Dear District Manager & Area Manager:

Thank you for the copy of the DEIS for your preliminary wilderness recommendations. I enjoy wilderness both vicariously and directly as a frequent hiker, backpacker, photographer, and wildlife watcher. I would like to make the following comments, first general, then specific.

GENERAL COMMENTS:

The document is well written. It is brief, concise, and yet has most of the needed information. The maps are a good scale, relatively clear and legible, although the surrounding vicinity is not shown for reference. The range of alternatives seems realistic and wide enough for the issues. The display of consequences is both specific and concise.

Table 2-1 is a good summary display of wilderness management implications. I would also suggest including the text of the Wilderness Act in the document to give readers a common understanding of the law's provisions.

18-1 The environmental analysis and management rationale, however, both seem biased against wilderness. The advantages of wilderness protection are understated, and the drawbacks are overstated. Although no significant adverse impacts were identified for wilderness, BLM still proposes that no acres be recommended for wilderness. And this is despite the fact that one of the areas, Timbered Crater, is designated wilderness in two of the three versions of the California Wilderness Bill, S. 5 and H.R. 1437. Perhaps the DEIS should explain this.

The DEIS and recommendations follow the pattern set by the BLM's 1979 wilderness inventory, the Alturas Resource Area RMP, and others; i.e., BLM recommends a minimal amount of wilderness, then the public comments heavily favor more wilderness, causing BLM to increase the wilderness acreage.

For both Timbered Crater WSA and Lava WSA, I suggest an unbiased reassessment, and adoption of Alternative 1, All Wilderness. The benefits are greater and the consequences less for Alternative 1 than for any other alternative, and than the DEIS has reported.

SPECIFIC COMMENTS:

18-2 p. 2-11, 4th paragraph. Actually, the resources of the area would benefit by wilderness designation in that the land could not be asset-managed out of public ownership. This benefit is correctly cited throughout Chapter 4.

18-3 p. 2-11, 5th paragraph. How many is "numerous" wilderness areas already in the region? The logic is unclear because it seems to equate the "quality" of wilderness resources with the "availability" of wilderness. Quality and quantity are being blurred. Also, could any one or two WSA's contribute "significantly" to the availability of wilderness; isn't it a cumulative contribution of many areas?

18-4 p. 3-8, Wildlife. An eagle pair nests just west of the area. Do they use any of the WSA for habitat, or could the WSA provide alternate nest trees? Wouldn't wilderness status offer more protection for the site?

18-5 p. 3-10, Special Features. How might maintaining or enhancing Baker cypress be incompatible with wilderness designation?

18-6 p. 3-10, Opportunities Near Population Centers. The numbers of wild areas are misleading without also mentioning (1) the sizes of these areas (many are very small), and (2) how many areas and acres are in the same ecosystems (different for each WSA). Also, the "administratively endorsed (wilderness) areas" term appears obsolete after recent changes.

18-7 The summary of "opportunities" looks only at supply--a sort of supply side wilderness thinking. It would complete the picture to describe demand also: past and present wilderness use, and projected use, as well as vicarious enjoyment.

18-8 p. 3-11, Geographic Distribution. Similar comments: what is "a large number"? This is typical of conclusionary rather than factual statements in the DEIS. Also, "proposed wilderness" again seems obsolete.

p. 3-11, Outstanding Opportunities. A low level of apparent use does not necessarily indicate non-exceptional values. Also, a low level of use can and usually is a real plus for wilderness recreation. Ref: Wilderness Act.

18-9 p. 3-12, Compatibility. A new land and resource management plan, instead of "new land management plans." The three parcels should be noted as being adjacent to the BLM Timbered Crater WSA. This would be a good place to reiterate that these parcels would not stand on their own as wilderness, thus indicating an incompatibility and an effect on other public land.

18-10 p. 3-13, Compatibility. Just how would wilderness management "constrain management options?"

18-11 p. 3-13, Other. Shasta County is presently revising its county general plan.

18-12 p. 4-1, first paragraph. "Constraints" is a term with negative connotations; there are positive aspects of wilderness management.

18-13 Table 4-1 shows a tendency to equate "recreation" with ORV use.

18-14 p. 4-11, Vegetation. Where is the ecosystem already represented and protected "in immediate area?" How many acres?

18-15 p. 4-13, Wilderness. Where are similar wilderness attributes "adequately represented in other areas preserving unique features?" How many acres? This is another conclusion without supporting data.

p. 4-16, second paragraph. Same question.

18-16 p. 4-16, third paragraph. This is not clear and can be reworded to better express this negative impact and conflict with the wilderness bills S. 5 and H.R. 1437.

Again, thank you for the chance to comment, and I hope the final EIS will show an analysis and recommendations more favorable for the wilderness values of the Lava and Timbered Crater WSA's. Please send me a copy.

Respectfully,

Curtis Spalding

COMMENT LETTER 19

JOHN R. SWANSON
P. O. Box 977
Berkeley, Calif 94701

August [illegible], 1983

Area Manager
Redding Resource Area
Bureau of Land Management
355 Hemsted Drive
Redding California 96002

Dear Sir,

Please accept my comments, as follows, concerning:
- Timbered Crater and Lava Wilderness Study Area, Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

I wish to share that I have been acquainted with such areas for nearly fifty years; and continue of the firm opinion that they must receive complete Wilderness classification - protection because Timbered Crater and Lava areas contain outstanding Wilderness, as well as, scenic wildlife, botanic and cultural resources of equal outstanding character. And are important portions of our nations' natural heritage areas that provide a vital refuge for Man, and Wild Life on this endangered planet.

I urge that the following units as well acreage - receive protection in Wilderness classification at this time, and included in our National Wilderness Preservation System

- Timbered Crater 19,000
- Lava 15,000

To acquire all Inholdings on all Public Lands.

To Ban, permanently, all forms of surface and sub surface development on all current and potential Wilderness.

With No - Release of any Road less areas - including Wilderness Study Areas - as they must be included as Wilderness.

Also, to understand that these two units, alone, and with suitable corridors including other Bureau of Land Management acreage as well as National Forest System lands, are of utmost National Monument potential.

And to accept that when we save Wilderness; we save America!

Sincerely,

John R. Swanson

COMMENT LETTER 20

United States Department of the Interior
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WESTERN REGION
450 GOLDEN GATE AVENUE, BOX 36063
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7619(WR-RP)

DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR
MAR 3
BUR

March 27, 1986

Memorandum

To: District Manager, Bureau of Land Management, Ukiah, California

From: ACTING Regional Director, Western Region

Subject: Review of Draft Environmental Statement for Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations for the Clear Lake Resource Area (DES-82/41), the Red Mountain Wilderness Study Area (DES-83/57), and the North Central California Wilderness Study Area (DES-83/20)

We have been requested to review the subject environmental statements. Most of our concerns deal with cultural resources in each case. However, we note that the Rocky Creek-Cache Creek WSA in the Clear Lake Resource Area contains a segment of Cache Creek included in the Nationwide Rivers Inventory; and that the Red Mountain WSA contains a tributary to the South Fork Eel River, a component of the Federal and State Wild and Scenic River Systems. We, therefore, support the management directions that would protect these important stream resources.

The following comments pertain to cultural resources in each of the documents:

Clear Lake Resource Area

The statement does not mention cultural resource legislative mandates, the Section 106 Compliance Process or planning consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer. Page 5-8 does indicate "existing regulations apply" to cultural resources but these are not defined. Page 4-2 of the statement notes that no survey has been undertaken for the Cedar Roughs WSA but that "it has low predicted sensitivity." Upon what is this conclusion based? The statement indicates also that very little survey work has been done for the Rocky Creek Cache Creek WSA because of "rugged terrain" and follows this reasoning with a conclusion of "no impact." Low sensitivity due to rugged terrain does not preclude sample survey of more likely areas and/or compliance with E.O. 11593. Rugged terrain can produce National Register sites, even though not numerous (i.e., this type of terrain can still contain springs and seeps which were frequent campsites; quarries and other specialized task sites are also known to occur). Finally, a wilderness (or no action) designation does not negate an agency's cultural resources responsibilities under Federal law.

North Central California Wilderness Study Area

20-1 This statement also is deficient in the treatment of prehistoric and historic cultural resources. References are made to "existing laws and regulations" (i.e., page 2-13 and page 4-6), but no official citations or synopses of the laws are given. No reference is made to Section 106 compliance nor compliance with the California State Historic Preservation Office (there is not, in fact, any indication the SHPO was provided with a copy of the draft document for review/comment). Consultation with a State Historic Preservation Office is important for planning/managing cultural properties, and conducting inventories, as well as the legally mandated consultation when significant properties may be impacted or destroyed during a Federal undertaking.

20-2 Page 2-18: A "no effect" conclusion is reached because there is "no indication of significant cultural resources in this area." Yet there is no indication the referenced area was ever surveyed. It should also be stressed that a No Action Alternative does not automatically convey No Effect; nor does it absolve an agency from its legally mandated cultural resources responsibilities.

20-3 Page 3-3: What is meant by an "intuitive survey of approximately 15-20% of the area (Friedman 1977)"? What is the methodology of an intuitive survey? We would appreciate a copy of this report for further cultural resources evaluation.

20-4 Page 4-14: Low sensitivity does not mean there are no significant sites eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. Significant sites may not be plentiful in poor terrain but they do occur. In this case, how was the low sensitivity conclusion determined?

Red Mountain Wilderness Study Area

This statement fails to mention the term "cultural resources" along with discussion of legislative mandates, the compliance procedure, consultation with the SHPO, etc. Cultural resources appear not to exist as a requirement that needs addressing.

We appreciate the opportunity to review these documents. Since the preceding comments deal with problems in the treatment of cultural resources, our staff contact for questions and further information is Holly Dunbar, Acting Chief, Interagency Archeological Services Branch, who can be reached at telephone number (FTS) 556-5190.

W. Russell White

cc:
WASO-762
Pat Port, REO
IAS, WRO

Response to Comment Letter No. 1 - from the Environmental Protection Agency

1-1 The issue of how water quality would be affected by wilderness designation or nondesignation was seriously considered as an issue for analysis in this EIS. However, this issue was not selected for analysis (see page 1-8) because no measurable impacts on water quality are anticipated under any of the alternatives. The lack of anticipated water quality impacts is due to three considerations:

1. Relatively few land disturbing activities under any of the alternatives (see the Management Actions listed in Chapter 2.)

2. The very porous nature of the soil results in very little runoff from the WSA.

3. The important water bodies south of the WSA (Fall River, Tule River, and Big Lake) derive their water entirely from large springs in that area.

Response to Comment Letter No. 2 - from the Soil Conservation Service

2-1 Future planning for these areas will take into consideration available soils information. None of the Management Actions you suggest have been identified as being necessary at this time. However, should soil erosion problems develop, they will be resolved to the extent of our budget capabilities.

Response to Comment Letter No. 3 - from the Resources Agency of California

3-1 Your concern is noted. Our recommendation is that neither of the WSAs be designated wilderness.

3-2 Nesting bald eagles in the Lava WSA will be protected from ORV use by a management action (see page 2-9) which will close the adjacent lands to wood gathering and ORVs. Use by eagles and osprey of the lands referred to in the Timbered Crater WSA is only incidental. Their use is focused closer to Big Lake and the Fall and Tule Rivers. No additional ORV restrictions are planned at this time within the WSAs. The classifications referred to are no longer in effect in this Resource Area and have been removed from the EIS.

3-3 Public lands in Section 27 and 34, T. 39 N., R. 5 E., have not been proposed for disposal.

Response to Comment Letter No. 4 - from the Atlantic Richfield Company

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 5 - from the California Mining Association

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 6 - from the Fall River - Big Valley Cattlemen's Association

6-1 Wilderness designation would not mean a loss of grazing resources because grazing is allowed to continue in wilderness areas. In a sense, mineral resources wouldn't be lost either. Their development for the foreseeable future would be prohibited, but the mineral resources themselves would be retained and remain available (should Congress release them) for some time in the distant future when they may be much more valuable then they are now.

Response to Comment Letter No. 7 - from the Minerals Exploration Coalition

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 8- from the Northeast Californians for Wilderness

8-1 BLM recommends against designation of these areas because their wilderness values including the opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation are not outstanding. Also considered was the fact the geologic characteristics of the lava formations of these WSAs are represented in numerous areas in the general vicinity and are already protected in the Lava Beds National Monument, Lassen Volcanic National Park, and Thousand Lakes Wilderness.

8-2 The EIS is designated to analyze significant environmental effects in relation to the existing management. In these particular cases, the designation of wilderness, as compared to present management, would not significantly change or benefit primitive recreation, solitude, wildlife habitat protection, threatened and endangered plant protection, archaeological resource protection, and disposal of significant resource values. Existing law, regulation, and policy already afford adequate protection for these resource values.

8-3 The Forest Service is presently reevaluating their administratively endorsed areas. They are considering several wilderness proposals. At this time, no precedents have been set since no decisions have been made.

Response to Comment Letter No. 9 - From PG&E

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 9 - from PG&E

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 10 - from Strout Realty, Inc.

10-1 Prior to the EIS process, the BLM had not made any recommendations toward a wilderness or nonwilderness designation. The EIS only identifies and analyzes alternatives including a preliminary recommendation. The formal study report makes a recommendation and is a decision document. As stated in the DEIS, the BLM is only making a formal recommendation which will be followed by a Congressional decision.

10-2 The values you mention (vegetation, archaeological, and wildlife) are analyzed on in Chapter 4 and have been considered in the development of BLM's recommendation, the rationale for which is on page 1-10.

Response to Comment Letter No. 11 - from Kenneth Beatty

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 12 - from C.T. Clohessy

12-1 See response to comment 10-1.

Response to Comment Letter No. 13 - from Margaret Drazen

13-1 See response to comment 10-1.

Response to Comment Letter No. 14 - from Rick Jones

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 15 - from Lynn Klousner

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 16 - from Robert Klousner

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 17 - from Santa Fe Ryan

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 18 - from Curtis Spalding

18-1 BLM's reasons for not recommending these WSAs for wilderness designation are explained in the response to comment 8-1 and on page 1-10.

18-2 The BLM has not proposed that public land be disposed of through the once referred to "Asset Management Program." A land adjustment would be made on 480 acres under application by the State of California under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. The objective of the Act is to meet the needs of certain State and local governmental agencies for public lands required for recreational and public purposes. The transfer would consolidate and improve management of the Ahjumawi-Lava Springs State Park. See Management Action 7 on page 2-4.

18-3 Both the availability of a certain type (ecosystem) of wilderness and the quality of the wilderness values of a given area are relevant to the wilderness designation decision. See response to comment 8-1.

18-4 Wilderness protection would not be likely to provide additional protection for the eagles or their nest site (which is about a half mile outside of the WSA) because: (1) They virtually do not use the WSA - all their foraging seems to be over Big Lake, (2) alternate nest sites are further to the west of the WSA, and (3) little disturbance is anticipated in the WSA with or without designation.

18-5 Wilderness designation would afford long-term protection to the Baker Cypress area. The sentence referred to has been deleted.

18-6 Detailed information on the distribution of wilderness areas and candidate wilderness areas has been omitted from this document because it is not relevant to environmental impacts. Such information will be included in the wilderness study report for these areas and can be obtained from the Alturas Resource Area Office.

18-7 Demand data was not available in a similar fashion for it to be used in a comparative analysis. Also see response to comment 18-6.

18-8 See response to comment 18-6.

18-9 Your comment is noted and the text has been revised.

18-10 Certain projects that may be proposed could impair wilderness values. One example would be the mechanical manipulation of brush fields to improve deer forage. In some instances this may be the only feasible option to meet resource objectives (based on terrain conditions, economics, etc.). As pointed out in the EIS, this does not appear to be a major problem since improvements made in the past would be permissible under wilderness designation. Habitat improvement activities, under a wilderness designation, would be limited to those not impairing wilderness values.

18-11 This is stated on page 3-13, DEIS, last sentence.

18-12 Positive benefits would result from wilderness designation. The FEIS has been revised to emphasize these benefits.

18-13 ORV use is considered a form of recreational use of the public lands.

18-14 The Sierra Forest Province includes 32,600 square miles within California. In this vicinity the Caribou Wilderness, Lassen National Park, Marble Mountain and John Muir Wilderness have lands that occur within this province. Also see response to comment 18-6.

18-15 See response to 11-14.

18-16 This has been deleted in the FEIS.

Response to Comment Letter No. 19 - from John Swanson

No response required.

Response to Comment Letter No. 20 - from the National Park Service

20-1 The analysis of impacts in this document assumes that relevant existing laws and regulations will be adhered to. It is not practical to list and explain all of these laws and regulations. However, the ones you refer to are mentioned on page 2-1 of this FEIS.

20-2 Your comment has been noted and the analysis changed. See Chapter 4 and Tables 2-1 of this FEIS.

20-3 In the jargon of archaeologists, an "intuitive survey" is a survey that does not involve a standard systematic sampling scheme. It amounts to examining the most likely sites within an area of concern.

20-4 Your statement is correct. The analysis in Chapter 4 has been changed.

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Rogers, Ronald W., 1982. Mineral Resource Potential of the Lava Wilderness Study Area CA-030-203. Shasta County, California.

Glossary

GLOSSARY

ANIMAL UNIT MONTH (AUM): The amount of forage required to sustain the equivalent of one cow or five sheep for one month.

CONTIGUOUS: Lands or legal subdivisions having a common boundary; lands having only a common corner are not contiguous.

FLPMA: The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579, 90 Stat. 2743.43 USC 1701).

IMPACT: The effect, influence, alternation, or imprint of an activity.

IMPAIR: To diminish in value or excellence.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING OPERATIONS: Those operations under permit where the primary purpose is the grazing of livestock for the production of food and fiber. Includes pack and saddle stock used in conjunction with such operations.

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN (MFP): The Bureau's basic planning decision document prior to the adoption of a new planning process in 1979, in which the decision document is a Resource Management Plan (RMP).

MINERAL ENTRY: The right to enter the Public Lands (under the administration of the BLM) to search for minerals and to claim or lease such minerals under the mining and mineral leasing laws and regulations.

MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT: Any machine activated by nonliving power source except small battery-powered, handcarried devices such as flashlights, shavers, Geiger counters, and cameras. Also "Mechanized Equipment."

MOTOR VEHICLE: Any vehicle which is self-propelled or any vehicle which is propelled by electric power obtained from batteries.

MULTIPLE RESOURCE VALUES AND USES: The present and potential uses of the various resources administered through multiple use management on the public lands and any public values associated with such uses.

MULTIPLE USE: "...the management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people; making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; the use of some lands for less than all of the resources; a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that take into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural, scenic, scientific, and historical values; and harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment with consideration being given to the relative values of the resources and not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output." (From Section 103, FLPMA.)

NATURALNESS: Refers to an area which "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable." (From Section 2(c), Wilderness Act.)

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV): Any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other terrain.

OUTSTANDING: 1. Standing out among others of its kind; conspicuous; prominent. 2. Superior to others of its kind; distinguished; excellent.

PLANNING AREA: The area for which resource management plans are prepared and maintained. In most instances, it is the same as the resource area, which is a geographic portion of a BLM District, under supervision of an Area Manager.

PLANNING CRITERIA: The factors used to guide development of the resource management plan, or revision, to ensure that it is tailored to the issues previously identified and to ensure that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided. Planning criteria are developed to guide the collection and use of inventory data and information, the analysis of the management situation, the design and formulation of alternatives, the estimation of the effects of alternatives, the evaluation of alternatives, and the selection of the preferred alternative.

POPULATION CENTER: A Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) which has a population of 100,000 or greater. An SMSA is a county which contains at least one city of 50,000 inhabitants or more plus as many adjacent counties as are metropolitan in character and are socially integrated with that central city or cities.

PRE-FLPMA: Before October 21, 1976, the date of approval of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

PRELIMINARY WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION: Refers to a wilderness recommendation at any stage prior to the time when the Secretary of the Interior reports his recommendation to the President. Until the Secretary acts, the recommendation is "preliminary" because it is subject to change during the administrative review.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION: Non-motorized and undeveloped types of outdoor recreation activities.

PUBLIC LANDS: For the purpose of the wilderness review program, any lands and interest in lands owned by the United States within the several States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquired ownership, except:

1. Lands where the United States owns the minerals but the surface is privately owned.
2. Lands being held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos.
3. Lands tentatively approved for State selection in Alaska.
4. Lands on the Outer Continental Shelf.
5. Oregon and California grant (O & C) lands that are managed for commercial timber production.

RANGELAND IMPROVEMENTS: Any structural or nonstructural improvements which directly affect or support the use of the forage resource by domestic livestock, such as fences, line cabins, water lines, and stock tanks.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (RMP): The basic decision document of BLM's resource management planning process, used to establish allocation and coordination among uses for the various resources within a Resource Area. An RMP is a "land-use plan" prescribed by Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. RMP regulations appear in 43 CFR 1601. (Refer to definition of Management Framework Plan.)

SMSA: Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area - see definition under "Population Center."

SOLITUDE: 1. The state of being along or remote from habitations; isolation. 2. A lonely, unfrequented, or secluded place.

SUBSTANTIALLY UNNOTICEABLE: Refers to something that either is so insignificant as to be only a very minor feature of the overall area or is not distinctly recognizable by the average visitor as being man-made or man-caused because of age, weathering, or biological change. An example of the first would be a few minor dams or abandoned mine buildings that are widely scattered over a large area, so that they are an inconspicuous part of the scene. Serious intrusions of this kind, or many of them, may preclude inclusion of the land in a Wilderness Study Area. An example of the second would be an old juniper control project that has grown up to a natural appearance, the old fallen trees largely decomposed.

SUITABILITY: As used in the Wilderness Act and in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, refers to a recommendation by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture that certain Federal lands satisfy the definition of wilderness in the Wilderness Act and have been found appropriate for designation as wilderness on the basis of an analysis of the existing and potential uses of the land.

WILDERNESS: The definition contained in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 891).

WILDERNESS AREA: An area formally designated by Act of Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS: The definition contained in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 891).

WILDERNESS INVENTORY: An evaluation of the public lands in the form of a written description and map showing those lands that meet the wilderness criteria as established under Section 603(a) of FLPMA and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act, which will be referred to as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs).

WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT: The management of human use and influence on lands which have been designated by an Act of Congress as wilderness areas.

WILDERNESS PROGRAM: Term used to describe all wilderness activities of the Bureau of Land Management including identification, management, and administrative functions.

WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS: A recommendation by the Bureau of Land Management, the Secretary of the Interior, or the President, with respect to an area's suitability or nonsuitability for preservation as wilderness.

WILDERNESS REPORTING: The process of preparing the reports containing wilderness recommendations on Wilderness Study Areas and transmitting those reports to the Secretary of the Interior, the President, and Congress.

WILDERNESS REVIEW: The term used to cover the entire wilderness inventory study and reporting phases of the wilderness program of the Bureau of Land Management.

WILDERNESS STUDY: The process that specifies how each Wilderness Study Area must be studied through the BLM resource management planning system, analyzing all resources, values and uses within the WSA to determine whether the area will be recommended as suitable or nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA): A roadless area or island that has been inventoried and found to have wilderness characteristics as described in Section 603 of FLPMA and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 891).

WILDLIFE IMPROVEMENTS: Any structural or nonstructural improvements which directly affect or support the use of water, food, or shelter by wildlife, such as guzzlers, water lines, or fences.

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United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
SACRAMENTO ENDANGERED SPECIES OFFICE
2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1823
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May 9, 1986

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Ed Hastey, State Director, Bureau of Land Management, California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way Sacramento, California 95825

FROM: Project Leader, Endangered Species Office, Sacramento, California 95825

SUBJECT: Consultation requirements for BLM Wilderness Designation 8500 (CA-930.1) (Case No. 1-1-86-I-321)

In response to your May 6, 1986, request for informal consultation regarding designation or non-designation of wilderness status for Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's), we concur with your statement that this process does not require formal Section 7 consultation. Any future actions on WSA's that might affect a listed species can be evaluated at proposal stage and formal consultations initiated if needed.

If you have questions regarding this reply please contact me at FTS/460-4866.

Gail C. Kobetich

cc: Chief, Endangered Species, Portland, OR 97232 (AFA-SE)

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CALIFORNIA STATE OFFICE
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, California 95825

IN REPLY REFER TO:
8500
CA-930.1

MAY 6 1986

Mr. Gail Kobetich, Project Leader
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sacramento Endangered Species Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

Dear Mr. Kobetich:

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management in California is preparing eleven final Wilderness EIS's during fiscal year 1986 that will analyze the environmental impacts of wilderness designation or non-designation on a total of 58 Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's). We hereby initiate informal consultation pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act concerning this matter.

Some of these WSA's provide important habitat for federally listed or proposed endangered species (for example, Peregrine Falcons and Bald Eagles). It has been determined by the BLM that the designation or non-designation of these areas as wilderness by Congress (at the recommendation of the BLM) will have only incidental benefit to any threatened or endangered species involved, not significant positive or negative effects.

We seek your concurrence that these wilderness designations or non-designations do not themselves require formal Section 7 consultation, but that such consultation must be initiated prior to on-the-ground implementation of activities which may affect threatened or endangered species under wilderness or non-wilderness designations.

Your prompt reply will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Ed Hastey
State Director

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Appendix